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ALEXANDER POPE, Esq.

COMPILED FROM

ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPTS;

WITH A

CRITICAL ESSAY

ON HIS

WRITINGS AND GENIUS.

---

BY OWEN RUFFHEAD, Esq.

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L O N D O N :

Printed for C. BATHURST, H. WOODFALL, W. STRAHAN,  
J. and T. RIVINGTON, W. JOHNSTON, B. WHITE,  
T. CASLON, T. LONGMAN, B. LAW, JOHNSON and  
PAYNE, S. BLADON, T. CADELL, and the Executors  
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## ADVERTISEMENT.

**T**HE following History hath been chiefly compiled from original manuscripts, which the writer had the honour to be entrusted with by the reverend and learned prelate, the Bishop of Gloucester, the intimate friend of Mr. POPE.

As a composition of this nature ought to be compleat in itself, without reference to any other work, the reader will, nevertheless, unavoidably meet with some repetitions of matter, which is already perhaps familiar to him.

In those instances, where the writer hath been indebted to others, more especially in what he hath borrowed from the Commentary and Notes, he hath, for the most part, followed the very words of the author, from whom the passages are taken. As in justice to the public, he would not presume to alter expressions which he could not mend; so in justice to himself, he would not



## ADVERTISEMENT.

incur the suspicion, of attempting to conceal the true owner, by a pitiful variation.

With respect to the critical animadversions on Mr. POPE's writings, and genius, he is far from being over anxious to make others adopt his sentiments. He will think it sufficient, if his remarks should engage the reader to review his own opinions. Where he hath presumed to differ from the most respectable authorities, he would be rather understood to propose a doubt, than to offer a contradiction: he is not so vain, to make light of the opinions of others; nor yet so modest, to suppress his own. It will give him less concern, however, to expose his want of judgment, than to be conscious of the despicable insincerity of feigning a conviction, which he does not feel.

To some, perhaps, the extracts will appear too copious, and he once entertained thoughts of referring to the passages, he judged proper to select. But, beside the great trouble and incessant interruption, which this would have occasioned to the reader, it occurred to him that it would be impossible, more especially in our



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author's moral and didactic pieces, fully and candidly to exemplify the beauties and blemishes of his compositions, without giving a short connected view of the plan of each piece, and of his chain of reasoning; which contributes, in some instances, to constitute the peculiar excellencies and faults, which are most material to be remarked.

It would, to a few perhaps, have been sufficient to have pointed out particular beauties by inverted commas, or other marks of distinction; and the writer is aware of the ostentation of citing fine passages with *general applauses*, and *empty exclamations*, at the ends of them. But he recollected, that slight intimations do not always strike precipitate readers. Besides, it is scarce possible sometimes, when we are smitten with a fine passage, to suppress those involuntary bursts of applause---*Euge! atque belle!* though, in truth, they are but empty exclamations.

Whenever such may have escaped from his pen, he trusts that the candid reader will ascribe them to a solicitude, which made him rather earnest to do justice to the poet's merit, than to raise an admiration of his own judgment.

Should



## ADVERTISEMENT.

Should the following sheets, which have been the fruit of a leisure vacation, be deemed by his graver friends, too foreign from the line of his profession; he hath only to answer, that as the nature of the human mind requires diversity to preserve the edge of attention, so, to him, no kind of relaxation could have been more agreeable: and in his choice, he is justified by the authority of the great Lord Coke---After making certain allotments of time, not much perhaps to the taste of a modern student, this great sage of the law thus directs the application of the remainder—

*Quod superest, ultro sacris largire camenis.*

Middle-Temple,  
Jan. 2, 1769.

OWEN RUFFHEAD.



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THE  
L I F E  
O F  
ALEXANDER POPE, Esq.

**A**MONG the chief beauties of a famous Italian poem, is the following allegory, so just and ingenious in the opinion of a great philosopher, that he has borrowed it to illustrate and adorn a general principle in one of his more capital works——Attached to the thread of every man's life, says the noble allegorist, is a little medal, whereon each man's name is inscribed, which TIME, waiting on the shears of FATE, catches up, as they fall from the inexorable steel, and bears to the river LETHE; into which, were it not for certain birds which keep flying about its banks, they would be immediately immersed. But these seize the medals ere they fall, and bear them for a while up and down in their beaks, with much noise and flutter; but careless of their charge, or unable to support it, they most  
B of



of them soon drop their shining prey one after another into the oblivious stream. Nevertheless among these heedless carriers of fame, are a few *swans*, who, when they catch a medal, convey it carefully to the Temple of IMMORTALITY, where it is consecrated.

These swans, of later ages, have indeed been *rarae aves*: What innumerable names have been dropped into the dark stream of oblivion, for one that has been consecrated in the bright temple of immortality!

When it is considered that the faculties which men receive from Nature, are perhaps nearly equal \*, and that so few distinguish themselves by the display of any superior talents, we are curious to become acquainted with the history of those, who by their merits have transmitted their names to posterity; and are anxious to discover by what means they attained that degree of excellence, which immortalized their memories.

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\* It would be too much to conclude with some systematical writers, that all men properly organized, are equally capable of the greatest efforts of genius: and that the inequality of talents is owing altogether to the difference of education. This is contradicted by daily experience. Education contributes mostly, but not wholly. Among youth, some are found to receive instruction with uncommon quickness of perception; while others, under the same preceptor, betray a slowness of apprehension, which evidently marks a constitutional difference between their mental faculties.



It is indeed difficult, to assign the reasons why talents equally promising, should, even under the like early cultivation, bear such unequal crops of fame. But if we attend minutely to the causes by which men have acquired renown, we shall find that perhaps the far greater part owed their reputation to adventitious circumstances, concurring to excite their emulation, and render application grateful.

Genius is not forward to endure the toil of persevering study. It is aspiring and impatient. Unless animated by the early dawn of enlivening hope, it will soon become torpid and supine: or at best only break forth by sudden and unequal starts. Praise and renown, are the rich rewards it covets. Praise, as POPE observes, is to a young wit, like rain to a tender flower. If it is not occasionally revived by refreshing showers of applause, it will shrink and wither.

The fruits of genius can only be matured by a constant and assiduous culture\*; without it, excelling parts may now and then produce a momentary blaze, but will never diffuse that strong and steady splendor, which shines to latest posterity.

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\* The display of genius seems to depend on the power of attention, which is greater or less according to the strength of the passion which excites it: and this again in a great measure depends on certain constitutional, though unknown, differences in the structure of our minds.



As such assiduity alone, can procure and eternize the glory of public applause, so it is the best title from whence we can derive the heart-felt pleasures of self-commendation. To be proud of the gifts of nature, is a preposterous vanity. Our improvements only, are what we can properly call our own, and which afford the most rational ground of inward approbation.

Various circumstances however frequently occur to check the habit of improvement. The same exquisite sensibility, and strong glow of spirits, which warms the genius, fires the libertine; and opens to every mode of dissipation. The blandishments of beauty, the joys of festivity, the attractions of pleasure, under all its alluring forms, conspire to withdraw the mind from great and noble pursuits. These allurements have greater or less ascendancy, in proportion as the objects of ambition are more or less distant. The habit of application will be vigorous or faint, as the reward proposed is great or small, near or remote. When genius wanders without a friendly guide to direct its steps, and encourage its progress; when it views but a faint prospect of reaping the rich rewards to which it aspires, then it too often becomes despondent \*; and resigns itself to the fatal in-

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\* We now and then, it is true, meet with a rare instance, where the passion which inspires a genius, is so strong and irresistible, as to rise superior to all discouragements and oppositions.



toxication of the softer pleasures. Thus in many, the latent powers of the mind remain unknown even to the possessor; and to these, among other reasons, it may be imputed that so many stop short in the career of glory, and that their names never reach posterity.

Among the few distinguished characters, however, whose names are rescued from oblivion, and enrolled in the bright annals of fame, they stand in the most conspicuous line, who have reaped the harvest of glory, in the active scenes of life. The bulk of mankind, are more solicitous to learn the history of statesmen and warriors, than to be acquainted with the calm and tranquil pursuits of poets and philosophers.

The regular and uniform tenor of a studious life, affords little variety for the entertainment of those who are more amused by a succession of glaring incidents, which gratify idle curiosity; than affected by a history, which might tend to enlarge the fund of useful knowledge.

It is nevertheless of more general importance to be acquainted with what, in some degree, concerns men of every rank, than with that which can only be interesting to a few, who move in the higher stations. It is more essential to reflect on the means by which an obscure man made his way to fame, through the still paths of life, than to pry into the intrigues of ministers, or gape at the achievements of heroes.



Add to this, that in the histories of statesmen and warriors, we often admire merit which is not their own. They are often directed by those, whom they appear to guide. Accident likewise, has a considerable share in the events, which render them celebrated. Nay, their very errors frequently, by strange and fortuitous occurrences, prove propitious to their fame.

But when we peruse the lives of the learned, when we admire the sentiments which adorn their pages, when we approve the moral and social rules, by which they framed their conduct; we then pay the just tribute of applause, where alone it is due.

At the same time it must be confessed, that even literary reputation has sometimes been undeservedly acquired, and unjustly withheld. There are not many readers perhaps who judge for themselves. The far greater part determine upon the authority of others, rather than from their own sentiments. Thus the partial judgment or caprice of some fashionable and over-ruling critic, often misleads the herd.

When a false judgment is once established, it is not easily subverted. They, adhere most pertinaciously to their opinions, who build them on the authority of others. Men in general are not forward to condemn, what their fathers approved. Thus error gains a kind of prescriptive title: till some other admired critic, to whom the throng pay implicit homage, has the  
spirit



spirit and virtue to oppose mistaken prejudice, and set the public judgment right.

There have been some, however, in the learned world, whose merit stands on so fair and firm a basis, as not to need the prop of partiality to support it, or to be in danger of being shaken or undermined by prejudice or caprice.

Among the few whose fame is thus firmly rooted, Mr. POPE stands capitally distinguished. Our bard, however, experienced the common fate of every man who starts from the crowd. Ignorance and envy waged war against his merit. So true is Moliere's observation——

*La vertu dans le monde est toujours poursuivie,  
Lex envieux mouront, mais non jamais l'envie.*

His towering fame however soon soared above the reach of those obscure DUNCES, who would have stopped his aspiring growth. But envy would not quit her hold; and when she could no longer detract from the faculties of his mind, maliciously endeavoured to arraign the virtues of his heart.

With what little justice attempts have been made to depreciate either the one or the other, will be examined in the course of the following sheets; and as an admiration of his genius shall not pervert the justice of criticism, so neither



shall a regard for his virtues, be an inducement to conceal his failings.

The life of a studious man can consist of little else than a character of *himself*, and of his *writings*; and the history of the author and of the man are so intimately blended, that they serve to illustrate each other: since, to an accurate observer, the temper and morals of a writer generally breathe through his works.

In this history, therefore, which will contain the most interesting particulars of our poet's life, an account will be interwoven of his writings, as they are published in the *octavo* edition; with such animadversions as they may occasionally furnish: as likewise with remarks on such criticisms as have appeared on particular pieces: and from this review of his writings, an attempt will be made to form a general critique, on the nature, force and extent of his *genius*.

As a critical disquisition of this nature, however, will be more peculiarly calculated for the entertainment of the learned, the reader's attention will be occasionally relieved, and his curiosity gratified, by a detail of several anecdotes, concerning our author and his contemporaries; of which many have never yet been made public.

Several instances likewise will be occasionally produced from his *unpublished* letters, of the  
strict



strict correspondence between his public and private sentiments. Such a comparison, it is apprehended, will be of singular benefit; for a reader cannot fail to receive additional delight and profit, when he is convinced of the sincerity of the writer's sentiments: which cannot be better demonstrated, than by such an exemplification.

Lastly, his *moral* character will be particularly exemplified in all its various relations: and this part of the design will be of the most general use; for though, to many, the account of the author may be most entertaining, yet the history of the man will be found most instructive. All may, and ought to, emulate the latter, though very few are blest with powers to rival the former.

Having thus stated the plan of the ensuing history, it next remains to make the reader acquainted with the circumstances of our author's life.

In the histories of celebrated persons, we frequently meet with fabulous relations of miraculous incidents, which attended them either in the womb, or in the cradle, as prophetic of their future eminence. We do not find, however, that any thing remarkable happened to our poet, either at his birth, or during his early infancy. No bees were seen to hang upon his lips, no doves bound his temples with the laurel of Apollo, or the myrtle of Venus.

He



He was born in London, on the 21st day of May, in the year 1688, and was christened by the name of Alexander. He descended from a good family in Oxfordshire, and we are indebted to the base and illiberal aspersions \* which malice attempted to throw on his character, for the following short account of his genealogy.

His father, whose Christian name was likewise Alexander, was a considerable merchant, and a distant relation to the Earl of Downe, whose sole heiress married the Earl of Lindsay. Our poet's mother, Editha, was the daughter of William Turner, Esq; of York. She had three brothers, one of whom was killed, another died, in the service of King Charles I. And the eldest, becoming a general officer in Spain, left her what estate remained after the sequestrations and forfeitures of her family.

Our bard was naturally of a tender and delicate constitution, but of a temper nevertheless

\* In one of Curl's and other pamphlets, Mr POPE's father was said to be a mechanic, a hatter, a farmer, nay a bankrupt; but what is strange, a nobleman (if such a reflection could be thought to come from a nobleman) had dropt an allusion to that pitiful untruth, in a paper, called An Epistle to a Doctor in Divinity. The following line likewise——

“ Hard as thy heart, and as thy birth obscure,”

fell from a like courtly pen, in certain verses to the imitator of Horace.—Our author, by way of refutation of these mean falsehoods, was tempted to publish the account of his genealogy which is given above.



peculiarly sweet and engaging; these circumstances, no doubt, contributed to endear him to his parents, for, as on the one hand, the mildness and suavity of his disposition attracted their love, so on the other hand, the imbecility of his frame, excited a tender commiseration; and thus both co-operated to increase and confirm their parental affection.

It was probably owing to their tenderness for him, that it was late before he was sent to school, having in his childhood been taught to read by an aunt. By the time he was seven or eight years old, he is said to have taken uncommon delight in reading: and it is remarkable that he learnt to write by imitating print, which he copied with great correctness and exactness.

When he attained his eighth year, he was placed under the private tuition of one Taverner, a priest\*, who lived somewhere in Hampshire; from him he learned the rudiments of the Latin and Greek tongues, and he made a very considerable progress under the care of this instructor.

At this very early age, he discovered the bent of his genius. About that time, he chanced to meet with Ogilby's translation of

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\* His family was of the Romish religion, in which he himself was educated, and constantly professed: but an occasion will occur hereafter to speak more particularly of his religious principle.



Homer, and was so smitten with the subject, that he read it with great avidity and delight; being then too young to be disgusted, by the poverty and insipidity of the version. He soon after took Sandys's Ovid in hand, and the agreeable impressions he received from these indifferent translations, were so powerful, that he ever after continued to speak of them with pleasure.

He did not remain long, however, under the tuition of the priest; he was sent from him, in a little time, to a private school at Twiford near Winchester. Neither did he continue there any considerable time; for in about a year he was removed from thence to a school near Hyde-Park Corner, being then about ten years of age. At these schools, he made no proficiency, but rather lost, under these two last negligent masters, what he had acquired under the former. He was himself so sensible of the insufficiency of his master at Twiford, that, among his earliest pieces, he wrote a very just satire, exposing the failings and defects he had discovered in him.

In the course of his school exercises however, he translated above one fourth of Ovid's Metamorphosis, besides detached pieces here and there. The translation of the Thebaid of Statius, was likewise among the productions of his childhood, but finding the verses, on a review of them, better than he expected, he gave it some correction in his riper years, and put it  
into



into the form wherein it is now printed in the octavo edition.

While he was at the school near Hyde-Park Corner, the attention paid to his conduct was so remiss, that he was suffered to frequent the playhouse in company with the greater boys. At his years, and with his cast of genius, it is easy to conceive that the novelty of theatrical representation, must have made a more than ordinary impression on his mind. He was so forcibly smitten with the charms of the drama, that he was disposed to imitation, and applied himself to turn the chief transactions of the Iliad into a kind of play, composed of a number of speeches from Ogilby's translation, tacked together with verses of his own.

By his early abilities and winning disposition, he had acquired such influence among his school-fellows, that he persuaded some of the upper boys to take parts in a representation of this juvenile piece, and he prevailed on the master's gardener to act the character of Ajax. The dresses of the actors were all modelled after the fashion of the prints in his favourite Ogilby, which, as some have remarked, formed the chief merit of that book, they having been designed and engraved by artists of note.

At the age of twelve, he went to reside at Binfield, in Windsor-Forest, with his father, who had retired thither from business about the time of the



revolution : and, having converted all his effects into money, he is said to have brought with him into the country, near 20,000 *l.* Being a papist, he could not vest his money on real security ; and as he adhered to the interest of James, he deemed it a point of conscience not to lend it to the new government. He therefore locked up this sum in his chest, and lived upon the principal, till by that time his son came to the succession, a great part of it was consumed. To this mistaken pertinacity, our bard, speaking of his father, alludes in the following lines, in his Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot :

“ For right hereditary tax’d and fin’d,  
 “ He stuck to poverty, with peace of mind.”

Soon after our author was, for a few months, placed under the tuition of another priest, one Deane, from whose instructions however, he received very little benefit, having made no farther progress under him, than that of being able to construe a little of Tully’s Offices.

Our poet was often heard to say, that he could never follow any thing which he did not pursue with pleasure : and his masters either wanted sagacity to discover the bent of his genius, or talents to adapt their instructions accordingly, so as to render his studies an amusement to him. Finding that he profited so little under their tuition, he formed a noble resolution, at this early period of life, of becoming his own master, and he began to cultivate his  
 talents



talents with unwearied sedulity. The method of study which he prescribed to himself for this purpose, was the reading of the classic writers, more especially of the poets, to whom he applied with great eagerness and enthusiasm.

It is in our early years, that the true bent of genius is discovered. It then acts spontaneously, nay in some, as has been intimated, it is so powerful as even to act against opposition. Mr. POPE's passion for poetry was so strong, that he often declared he began to write verses earlier in life than he could call to memory; and he says, in his Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot:

“ I list'd in numbers, for the numbers came.”

When he was yet a child, his father would frequently set him to make English verses, and, though no poet, was nevertheless so very difficult to be pleased, that he would make his son correct them again and again. When they were to his mind, he took pleasure in perusing them, and would say, “ These are good rhymes.” It has been well observed, that the early praises of a tender and respected parent, co-operating with the powerful bias of natural inclination in the son, might fix our young bard in his ambition to become eminent in this art.

It seems, however, that his father had sometimes recommended to him the study of physic\*, but

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\* Letter 8th, to Cromwell.



this could be no more than a bare recommendation, since our author himself assures us, in the epistle above mentioned, that he broke no duty, nor disobeyed any parent by commencing poet——

“ I left no calling for this idle trade,  
“ No duty broke, no father disobey’d.”

By the time he was fifteen, having made a very respectable proficiency in the learned languages, he expressed a very strong desire of removing to London, in order to learn French and Italian. His family, whose sollicitude chiefly regarded the improvement and preservation of his health, and who knew that his miserable infirm state of body, would never suffer him to travel abroad, where those languages might be of most use to him, could not help considering his design as wild and extravagant. He nevertheless persisted in it; and they yielding to his importunities, he came to town, where he mastered those languages with surprizing dispatch. It was very remarkable, that though he was vastly impatient of restraint in the common scholastic forms of education, yet, now he was his own master, he readily subjected himself to the fatigue and drudgery of perpetually recurring to grammars and dictionaries: by which means, with a strong appetite for knowledge, which made him intent on every subject he read, he insensibly made himself master of the learned and modern languages.

His



His passion for poetry, however, being predominant, he was eager to explore all the treasures of Parnassus; and between this and his twentieth year, he devoted himself entirely to the reading of the most considerable poets and critics in the Greek, Latin, French, Italian and English languages. About this time likewise, he made a translation of Tully *de Senectute*, a copy of which, it is said, is preserved in Lord Oxford's library.

In all this time, he has been heard to declare that he never read any treatise on the art of logic or rhetoric. Locke indeed fell into his hands, but he confessed that his essay was at first quite insipid to him. Nature, however, having early disposed him to method in his compositions, and philosophic reflection quickly following, and soon enabling him to correct the flights of his imagination, as clearly appears from his juvenile letters, he became delighted with that *precision of thought*, which is the characteristic of that immortal essay: and Mr. Locke had so warmed and fortified his innate love of truth, that the only thing, he used to say, he could never forgive his philosophic master, was the dedication to the essay\*.

He likewise read Sir William Temple's essays; but when he met with any thing political in them, he owned that he had no manner of relish for

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\* This dedication, though it contains many just and sensible remarks, is in general couched under such terms of unmanly adulation, as degrade the scholar and the philosopher.



it. This dislike for politics, continued throughout his whole life : and farther than a warm love for his country, which never could mislead him, and for his friends, which sometimes, perhaps, did, (that is, his judgment only) his indifference at last ended in aversion. In a word, his early studies were confined to poetry, and the Belles Lettres\*. But still, as he assures us, he read without any design but that of pleasing himself. He prosecuted such studies as accident threw in his way, or as the caprice of fancy inclined him to pursue. He used to observe, that, during this time, he was like a boy gathering flowers in the fields and woods, just as they rose before him ; and he always spoke of these four or five years, which were passed in mere curiosity and amusement, as the most pleasing part of his life.

Whenever he met with any passage or story which delighted him more than common, it was his custom to imitate it. But he has often declared, that the first propensity to imitation, proceeded rather from motives of modesty, than vanity. He perceived how defective his own productions were, and endeavoured to mend his composition by copying the capital strokes of others : and thus he became a poet, as the best artists have become painters, by copying from

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\* He used to declare, that of the Latin poets, he preferred Statius next after Virgil ; and that of the Italian, he liked Tasso better than Ariosto. His taste in this latter respect had not been viciated like Milton's, by much reading of the Gothic romances of chivalry.



the *antients*; with this difference only, that as he frequently copied the best *moderns* likewise, which those painters had not the same opportunity of doing in their art, he as commonly excelled as he copied.

Mr. POPE's discernment, however, was too acute not to perceive the defects of such irregular and desultory habits of study. For though a retentive memory and correct judgment enabled him to remedy many of those defects, they at the same time contributed to render him more sensible of them all. At twenty therefore, when the impetuosity of his spirits began to subside, and his genius grew more patient of restraint, he subjected himself to the toil of renewing his studies from the beginning, and went through the several parts of a learned education, upon a more regular and well-digested plan. He penetrated into the general grounds and reasons of speech; he learnt to distinguish the several species of style; he studied the peculiar idiom of each language, with the genius and character of each author; he mastered those parts of philosophy and history\*, which mostly contributed to enrich the store of sentiment:

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\* Our author, in his riper years, used to say, that the true use of reading was not to know facts, but to understand human nature, and therefore recommended the study of history. "I should read, said he, in a very different manner now than when I had my early fit of reading, from 14 to 20. Then it was merely from the amusement the story afforded me, now it should be with the view of learning how to make myself and others better."



and lastly, he reduced his natural talent for poetry, to a science.

From the age of twenty to twenty-seven, he pursued this system with unremitted attention and severity; and he used to say, that he had spent these seven years, in unlearning all that he had acquired before.

Many circumstances, however, contributed to fix him in a habit of persevering industry. His constitution was too infirm and delicate to sustain the violent agitations of licentious pleasures: so that his tender frame preserved him from those modes of intemperance, to which genius, in particular, has often proved a victim. The strength of the passions, as has been hinted, will always be in proportion to the vigour of the imagination. For true genius, as is well observed by a critic whom I shall shortly have occasion to mention, rarely resides in a cold phlegmatic constitution. But his sickly state of health soon making him sensible of sensual excesses, he was early checked from giving way to those allurements, which, unless the mind is armed with a due portion of firmness, lead to every species of inertness and dissipation.

Perhaps too the uncomeliness of his person, might not be without some effect. It has been well remarked by Lord Bacon, that whoever hath any thing fixed in his person, that doth induce contempt, hath also a perpetual spur within himself, to rescue and deliver himself from scorn. This consideration, therefore, might  
render



render our poet more assiduous to cultivate his mental faculties, that he might atone for the defects of an ungraceful figure, by the accomplishments of an elegant and polished mind.

As these considerations were incentives to his industry, so the condition of his circumstances proved propitious to the perfection of his studies. For, in the early part of his life, he inherited a decent competence, sufficient to defray all the expences which his constitution and appetites required. Being free from want and dependance, he was under no necessity to produce fugitive incorrect pieces for a present supply; or to prostitute his talents to serve the interest of a bookseller, or flatter the depravity of the times.

During his retirement in Windsor-Forest, he became acquainted with Sir William Trumball \*, who, in the year 1691, was appointed one of the principal secretaries of state, which office he resigned in the year 1697, and retired to East-Hamstead, the place of his nativity, which was near Binfield; and it was not long before Mr. POPE was introduced to him. Sir William delighted in learned converse, being of a studious turn, and particularly inclined to classical and polite literature. Our poet, therefore, could

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\* Among other singularities in the character of this statesman, it is said, that in the year 1687, being appointed ambassador to the Ottoman Porte, he performed the journey on foot.



not fail of being agreeable to one with whom nature had formed him to assimilate, notwithstanding the inequality of their years: and Sir William soon admitted him to a share of his friendship. They associated together on terms of intimacy, and, when they were separated, a literary correspondence subsisted between them, so long as Sir William lived; and at his death, Mr. POPE did justice to his memory, by the epitaph now extant among his works.

This retirement in the forest, could not be otherwise than grateful to a studious mind, and we may judge of the impressions it made, from our poet's having, about this time, composed his Ode on *Solitude*, which is the first fruit now extant of his poetical genius, and which strongly paints that tranquil, contemplative, and moral cast of mind, which distinguished the writer\*.

In this retreat likewise, he first became acquainted with the writings of Waller, Spencer and Dryden. The works of Spencer, he perused with great delight, and renewed his acquaintance with them in his riper years. But on the first view of Dryden's works, he was so struck with the excellence of a writer, whose

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\* We must not infer from hence, however, what a learned critic would insinuate, that Mr. POPE's genius was confined, and that he was not master of a creative and glowing imagination, the "*Acer spiritus ac vis.*" But the nature, force, and extent of his genius, will be best determined by a progressive and candid examination of his several pieces.



talents were congenial with his own, that he abandoned the rest, and studied his writings with uncommon pleasure and unremitted attention. He used to say, that Dryden had improved the art of versification beyond any of the preceeding poets, and that he would have been perfect in it, had he not been so often obliged to write with precipitation. His works, therefore, served as one of the models from whence our poet copied, and he even adopted the very turns of his periods: just as Mr. Addison did those of Sir William Temple in prose, not less strongly marked than the imitations of the poet, though less commonly observed. In short, from Dryden principally, our bard learnt all the magic of his versification.

From the time he became so enamoured of Dryden's works, he grew impatient to see the author, and at length procured a friend to introduce him to a coffee-house which Dryden frequented, where he had the satisfaction of seeing him. But Dryden died before any intimacy could take place between them, which Mr. POPE often lamented, particularly in his first letter to Mr. Wycherley, in the following pathetic manner.—“*Virgilium tantum vidi.*” He never spoke of him without a kind of rapturous veneration, and he makes respectable mention of him in several parts of his works.

During his residence in the forest, our poet, being then between the years of thirteen and fifteen, composed a comedy and a tragedy. With regard to the subject of the former, we are wholly in



the dark ; the latter however was founded on a story taken from the legend of St. Genevieve. But whether he distrusted his talents for dramatic poetry, or whether he was cautious of hazarding his fame on the fickle taste of a capricious audience, he could never be prevailed on to write for the stage, though he was strongly importuned by several, and particularly by Betterton \*, with whom he was acquainted from a boy †.

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\* It appears to have been Mr. Betterton's good fortune, to have been not only admired as a player, but esteemed as a man. In the postscript to one of our author's letters to Mr. Cromwell, he speaks of him in a manner, which does honour to his memory.

“ This letter of deaths, puts me in mind of poor Mr. Betterton's ; over whom I would have this sentence of Tully for an epitaph, which will serve him as well in his *moral*, as in his *theatrical* capacity——

“ *Vitae bene actae jucundissima est recordatio.*”

In another letter to the honourable J. C. he speaks of him with greater warmth of affection——“ I am very glad, says he, for the sake of his widow, and for the credit of the deceased, that Betterton's remains are fallen into such hands, as may render them reputable to the one, and beneficial to the other. Besides the public acquaintance I long had with that poor man, I also had a slender knowledge of his parts and capacity by private conversation, and ever thought it pity he was necessitated, by the straitness of his fortune, to act (and especially to his latest hours) an imaginary and fictitious part, who was capable of exhibiting a real one, with credit to himself, and advantage to his neighbour.”

† Mr. Cromwell likewise pressed our author very strongly to pay his court to the Tragic Muse, as appears from the following passage.

“ Leave



In his latter days he told a particular friend that he had a strong propensity to the tragic drama, and should certainly have made it his principal study, had not the moral and intellectual characters of the players of his time, so different from that of Betterton, always deterred him from putting his design in execution. And whoever has carefully observed, in his other works, the profound penetration into nature, and easy sublime of expression, together with his uncommon correctness of judgment, will hardly doubt but he would have succeeded to the utmost of his ambition, and what is more to his own satisfaction, in the merit of theatrical composition.

Soon after his composing these dramatic pieces, our poet had the courage to attempt the arduous task of writing an epic poem, which he called *Alcander* ‡, of which he wrote four books of about

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“ Leave elegy and translation to the inferior class, on whom the Muses only glance now and then, like our winter’s sun, and then leave them in the dark. Think on the dignity of tragedy, which is of the greater poetry, as Dennis says, and foil him at his other weapon, as you have done in criticism. Every one wonders that a genius like yours will not support the sinking drama; and Mr. Wilkes (tho’ I think his talent is comedy) has expressed a furious ambition to swell in your buskins.”

‡ As some, perhaps, may be curious of farther information respecting this early and adventurous essay, it may not be improper to subjoin the following particulars. *Alcander* was a prince of Rhodes, driven from his crown by Deucalion, father of Minos. In this epic piece, *Alcander* displayed all

the



a thousand verses each. Into this piece, he confessed, though with a ridicule on the attempt, that he had thrown all his learning, as Milton has done with too much profusion, in his *Paradise Lost*. This *Alcander* was chiefly an imitative poem, in which Mr. POPE had collected the several beauties of all the epic writers he was then acquainted with\*.

It is the characteristic of a great genius to make early efforts far beyond its strength. Our poet, however, was sensible of the weakness of this attempt, and speaks of it with the most amiable frankness, in a passage restored to the excellent preface before his works. "I confess," says he, "there was a time when I was in love with myself, and my first productions were the children of self-love upon innocence, I had made an epic poem, and panegyrics on all the princes of Europe, and I thought myself the greatest genius that ever was. I cannot but regret these delightful visions of my childhood, which, like the fine colours we see when our eyes are shut, are vanished for ever."

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the virtues of suffering, like Ulysses, and all the courage of Eneas. Apollo, as the patron of Rhodes, was *Alcander's* great protector; and Cibeles was his great enemy, as being patroness of Deucalion and Crete. She raises a storm against him, as Juno does against Eneas: he is cast away, and swims to shore, as Ulysses did, to the island of Phæacia.

\* Among other proposals, which Betterton made him to write for the stage, he strongly pressed him to turn this *Alcander* into a tragedy; but no importunity could prevail on Mr. POPE to engage in such an undertaking.

Atter-



Atterbury, the Bishop of Rochester, a little before he left England, advised him to burn it, which he did \*, though as he confessed with some regret.

The bishop, on this occasion, in one of his letters to Mr. POPE, expresses himself thus---  
 “I am not sorry your Alcander is burnt; had I known your intentions, I would have interceded for the first page, and put it, with your leave, among my curiosities.” As a proof, however, that this early piece was deeply imprinted in his memory, and that he was not partial to its imperfections, he took a pleasure in laughing at the childish extravagances in this poem, and in mentioning them to his friends. Among these, was a description of a Scythian hero, who contemned a pillow, though of snow, as luxury and effeminacy. Some of these extravagances, are pleasantly produced for examples in the art of *sinking in poetry*, under the title of verses by an Anonymous. He must be a writer of true genius, who has the virtue to ridicule his own defects.

The ridicule, however, of this juvenile attempt, did not discourage him from once more attempting this species of composition; for, in his riper years, he formed a design of writing an epic poem, founded on a story recorded in the old annalist

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\* It may not be immaterial to add, that the dramatic pieces above spoken of, shared the same fate.



Geoffrey of Monmouth, concerning the arrival of Brutus the supposed grandson of Æneas into our island, and the settlement of the first foundations of the British monarchy, of which more hereafter.

Mr. POPE's next poetical essay, after this epic piece of Alcander, was his *Pastorals*, which he wrote at the age of sixteen: and he used to say pleasantly, that herein he literally followed the passage in Virgil, where he says,

“*Cum canerem reges et praelia,*” &c.

Being now come to such part of his works, as have undergone the trials of criticism; it remains agreeably to the plan proposed, to examine the several pieces respectively, in the order they stand in the *octavo* edition.

This examination, however, will not be made with the partial bias of a panegyrist, in order to rescue his writings from just censure; but to measure them by the scale of candid criticism, the better to ascertain the nature, force and extent of his genius.

The name of a critic, being generally received in an ill sense, is become odious, because the office hath been abused by half learned or envious witlings; who have been curious to detect blemishes, forgetting the other and more pleasing task of a critic, which is to point out beauties.

Many



Many of those who have occasionally criticised on our poet, have written only to expose their ignorance or their ill nature. Peace to the remains of futility and envy !

There is one however, (the author of *An Essay on the genius and writings of Pope*) who \* has undertaken the office in form ; and has, so far as he has gone, executed it, at least with politeness and elegance. If I am inclined to dispute some of his principles, and cannot always subscribe to the propriety of his applications, I shall at least, wherever I dissent from him, endeavour to express myself with the same temper, and with the same decorum. Persuaded as I am, that the learned writer meant

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\* This work is anonymous, but the name of the author is well known to the learned world. As he has himself, however, thought proper to conceal it from the public, I do not think myself at liberty to proclaim it : for though the merit of the work is such, as, upon the whole, might do credit to any name, yet it is but decent to allow every writer to be the best judge of what conduces to his own interest and reputation. At the same time, I will be free to observe, that though this essay is evidently the work of an elegant critic and polite scholar ; yet it by no means answers to the title. Passages are frequently cited from Mr. POPE, without the least remark upon them ; and only serve to introduce a string of anecdotes and quotations concerning foreign writers, or perhaps foreign subjects. This method, it is true, is extremely entertaining to readers of a certain class ; but it is rather too miscellaneous and digressive : and, let it be said, without envy or ill-manners, that it favours too much of a lavish display of erudition, to which a writer, of such approved learning, might have deemed himself superior.



to fix the true merit of our poet, and to serve the cause of literature; and being conscious that I am influenced by the same motives, I shall freely animadvert on the errors and inaccuracies of the critic, and as candidly admit the justice of his censure, and the propriety of his corrections. In this critique, however, I shall pursue a different method from the author of the Essay: for before he enters into any examination of our poet's writings, he, in his dedication to Dr. Young, and in other places, more than hints his opinion of the nature and extent of our poet's genius. But I propose first to analyze Mr. POPE's writings, and from thence shall attempt to ascertain the nature and force of his genius: for as I should blush to mislead, so I equally scorn to prepossess the reader.

The *pastorals* are the first pieces which fall under the examination of our critic; and with respect to these, he observes in the very opening, "that it is somewhat strange that in the *pastorals* of a young poet, there should not be found a single rural image that is new." As the essayist, in the course of his criticisms, frequently objects a barrenness of invention to Mr. POPE, it is to be wished that he had previously defined what *invention* is, or at least what he intended by the use of that word. As he has omitted it however, an attempt will be made in its proper place, to ascertain the meaning of *invention*, the better to determine how far the want of it may be imputed to Mr. POPE.



At present it is sufficient to observe, that was it true as the critic objects, that there is not a single rural image in these pastorals that is new, it is no more than what our poet himself premises, with that candor and modesty which is ever attendant on genuine merit. For in his excellent discourse prefixed to these pastorals, he concludes with the following declaration. "But after all, if they have any merit, it is to be attributed to some good old authors, whose works as I had leisure to study, so I hope I have not wanted care to imitate." Notwithstanding this modest declaration, perhaps some passages may be justly deemed original.

It is observable that a pastoral is appropriated to each season of the year, and that the scene as well as the hour of the day, is artfully distinguished in each, which in some instances gives a peculiar beauty to the imagery; as in the following couplet describing the *summer* season: the scene is by a river side; and the time of the day, *noon*.

"Where dancing sun-beams on the waters play'd,  
"And verdant Alders form'd a quiv'ring shade."

These lines are perfectly picturesque, nor are the following inferior.

"Soft as he mourn'd, the streams forgot to flow,  
"The flocks around a dumb compassion show,  
"The naiads wept in ev'ry watry bow'r,  
"And Jove consented in a silent show'r."

Though



Though it may be allowed that the new images in these pastorals are not frequent, yet in truth, it is too much to say, that they do not afford a single image that is new. Let any reader of sensibility attend to the following lines in the second pastoral, where the poet describes the charms of his mistress's voice.

“ But would you sing and rival Orpheus' strain,  
 “ The wond'ring forest soon should dance again,  
 “ The moving mountains hear the pow'rful call,  
 “ *And headlong streams hang list'ning in their fall.*”

The last line surely presents a *new* image, and a bold one too \*.

The following couplet likewise from the fourth pastoral, describing the effects occasioned by the

\* Perhaps it will be thought that Mr. POPE had Milton's Masque in remembrance, wherein the latter speaks of Thyrsis,

“ —whose artful strains have oft delay'd  
 “ The huddling brook to hear his madrigal.”

But this, compared to Mr. POPE's, is rather *narrative* than *descriptive*. Mr. POPE presents us with the *image* of *attention*, which is purely his own.

I cannot avoid taking notice of these beautifully plaintive lines in the same pastoral, which are not imitations of any writer I know of.

“ Once I was skill'd in ev'ry plant that grew,  
 “ And ev'ry herb that drinks the morning dew;  
 “ Ah! wretched shepherd, what avails thy art  
 “ To cure thy lambs, but not to heal thy heart.”

death



death of Daphne affords a new image, and the personification has a fine effect.

“ The balmy *zephyrs*, silent since her death,  
“ Lament the ceasing of a sweeter breath \*.”

The same may be said of the following beautiful couplet in this pastoral.

“ No more the mounting larks, while Daphne  
“ sings,  
“ *Shall list’ning in mid-air suspend their wings.*”

The image of the birds listening with their wings suspended in mid-air, is striking; and I trust, new †.

Our critic having thus set out with denying our poet the merit of invention, he immediately makes a kind of digression in praise of Theocritus; whom he very frequently styles the father and model of this enchanting kind of composition. Theocritus, he observes, derived many

\* The four lines which precede these, are incomparably fine; but I know not whether they may not be considered as imitations of those beautiful pastoral images in Eve’s speech to Adam; which are thus recapitulated :

“ But neither breath of morn, when she ascends  
“ With charm of earliest birds,” &c.

† The two lines however which immediately follow,

“ No more the birds shall imitate her lays,  
“ Or hush’d with wonder, hearken from the sprays,”

do but convey the same image, a little diversified.



advantages from the climate in which he lived and wrote. "The poet," says he, "described what he saw and felt, and had no need to have recourse to those artificial assemblages of pleasing objects, which are not to be found in nature. The figs and honey which he assigns\* as a reward to a victorious shepherd, were in themselves exquisite, and are therefore assigned with great propriety."

With due deference to our critic, however, these remarks do not appear to be well founded. The figs and honey of Sicily, however exquisite in themselves, were common to the inhabitants: and whoever is acquainted with the nature of the human appetites, will allow that things in general estimation, are not always valued because they are in themselves exquisite, but because they are scarce and rare. If they are common, they in some degree lose their value, and consequently any other reward, though less exquisite in itself, is most likely to become the object of desire. Any other premium than figs and honey, might therefore, in Sicily, have been assigned with greater propriety, and would have displayed more *invention* in the Sicilian bard.

A poet is not confined to his own country for images. He may range throughout the universe, and is not always, as Addison remarks, strictly bound by the laws of nature; much less

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\* Idyll. I. v. 146.



restrained in his descriptions to the produce of particular climes. He may impregnate every soil with what seed best suits his purpose: he may make the spicy gales of Arabia, diffuse their fragrance over scentless and sterile wilds: he may bring the garden of the Hesperides from its native Africa, and make the golden fruit ripen in the most untoward clime. The following censure, therefore, will probably be thought too nice and captious. "Complaints," says he, "of immoderate heat, and wishes to be conveyed to cooling caverns, when uttered by the inhabitants of Greece, have a decorum and consistency which they totally lose in the character of a British shepherd."

That such causes of complaint will more frequently occur in the Grecian climate, is unquestionable; but is it necessary to make a complaint of this kind consistent, that every day should be a dog-day? The British shepherd might very consistently describe what he often felt, though not so frequently as the Grecian; and we have days in England, which might make even a Grecian faint.

He admits, however, that Mr. POPE was sensible of the importance of adapting images to the scene of action; which he instances in the translation of the following line:

"*Audit Eurotas, jussitque ediscere lauros.*"

Here our poet, as the critic candidly observes, has dropped the *laurels* appropriated to Eurotas,



as he is speaking of the river Thames; and has rendered it

“Thames heard the numbers as he flow’d along,  
“And bade his *willows* learn the moving song\*.”

Our critic objects that “a mixture of British and Grecian ideas, may be justly deemed a blemish in the PASTORALS of POPE: and propriety,” he adds, “is certain to be violated when he *couples* Pactolus with the Thames,” &c. How far such a violation is to be imputed to our poet, let the lines from the mouth of the shepherd speak for themselves.

“O’er golden sands let rich Pactolus flow,  
“And trees weep amber on the banks of Po;  
“*Blest Thames’s shores the brightest beauties*  
“*yield* †,  
“Feed here, my lambs, I’ll seek no distant field.”

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\* The author of the Elements of Criticism, objects to this descriptive personification, as destitute of resemblance to any thing real. “Admitting,” says he, “that a river gently flowing, may be imagined a sensible being listening to a song; I cannot enter into the conceit of the river’s ordering his laurels to learn the song: here all resemblance to any thing real is lost. This, however,” he concludes, “is copied literally by one of our greatest poets.”

It must indeed be confessed, that this fiction of the imagination, is, in the foregoing instance, used rather licentiously. But the critic is mistaken in saying, that our author has copied the original literally; since, as above observed, he has very judiciously changed the image, though he has given full scope to the fiction.

† The third line of this stanza, is very far from being smooth and harmonious. The genitive case hangs upon the tongue, and beside, occasions a very disagreeable hissing.

What



What the critic means by *coupling* Pactolus with Thames, it is not easy to conjecture. They stand evidently *contradistinguished*: and surely the poet might draw a contrast from Greece, without being chargeable with a faulty *mixture* of British and Grecian ideas.

Ever partial to his favourite Sicilian, the critic prefers his imagery to Mr. POPE's in the following instance. "A shepherd," says he, "in Theocritus, wishes with much tenderness and elegance, both which must suffer in a literal translation,—" "Would I could become a murmuring bee, fly into your grotto, and be permitted to creep among the leaves of ivy and fern, that compose the chaplet which adorns your head." POPE, he observes, has thus altered this image:

"Oh! were I made by some transforming pow'r  
 "The captive bird that sings within thy bow'r!  
 "Then might my voice thy list'ning ears *employ*,  
 "And I those kisses he receives, enjoy."

"On three accounts," he concludes, "the foregoing image is preferable to the latter. For the pastoral wildness, delicacy, and uncommonness of the thought."

It is somewhat strange that the critic should applaud the Greek image for the uncommonness of the thought: since it is the perfection of pas-



toral images to be simple and natural. The beauty of this kind of poetry, arises from a natural ease of thought, and smoothness of verse. Now nothing can be more simple and natural, and at the same time more plaintive and pathetic, than the image of Mr. POPE; nor can any thing be expressed with greater beauty, and harmony of numbers\*.

A lover who wishes for a metamorphosis, for the sake of approaching more closely to his mistress, would undoubtedly wish to be transformed into something which might be the object of her caresses, and not into that from which she would shrink and retire.

The image in Theocritus is strained and unnatural: that in POPE is natural and fervid.

The pleasure which the shepherd in Theocritus proposes from his transformation, of creeping among the leaves of ivy and fern which compose his mistress's chaplet, is cold and insipid, compared to the animated and glowing wish of POPE's shepherd, who longs to supplant his feathered rival; and dwell upon the enchanting lip of his favourite fair.

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\* Perhaps, however, in point of strict propriety, the word *employ*, in the third line, is not happily chosen. To *employ*, is to call forth the exertion of some *active* faculty. But the ear in listening is *passive*: and if the rhyme would have admitted, the verb *engage* should seem most proper.



Impartial judgment must, nevertheless, in some degree, subscribe to the propriety of our critic's animadversion on the riddle of the Royal oak, in the first pastoral, which is in imitation of the Virgilian enigma; and, as he well observes, favours of pun and puerile conceit.

“ Say, Daphnis, say, in what glad soil appears,  
“ A wond’rous tree that sacred monarchs bears ?”

“ With what propriety, the critic asks, could the tree whose shade protected the King, be said to be prolific of princes ?” Here however, there does not seem to be the impropriety which the critic apprehends. For the tree, by preserving the royal line, may, not improperly, be said to be prolific of Princes. After all, if idle riddles be a rural amusement all the world over, there can be no great objection to their being introduced in pastoral scenes : and if reason would not justify the use of them without example, our bard could shelter himself under no authority more unexceptionable than that of Virgil.

Among these pastorals, the most conspicuous is the Messiah, a sacred eclogue, in imitation of Virgil's Pollio \*. This, the critic allows to be

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\* It is but just to observe, that our critic has corrected a grammatical error in the *Messiah*, where our poet should have said, The swain——

“ *Shall* START amidst the thirsty wild to hear  
“ New falls of water murmuring in his ear.”



superior to the Pollio : and indeed, if Mr. POPE had given no other instance of the sublime, this alone would prove the sublimity of his genius †. How solemn and awful is the following invocation !

——“ O Thou my voice inspire  
“ Who touch'd Ifaiah's hallow'd lips with fire !”

In what a bold exalted strain, does the poet break forth,

“ Hark ! a glad voice the lonely desert cheers ;  
“ Prepare the way ! a God, a God appears :  
“ A God, a God ! the vocal hills reply,  
“ The rocks proclaim th' approaching Deity.  
“ Lo, earth receives him from the bending skies !  
“ Sink down, ye mountains, and, ye vallies, rise ;  
“ With heads declin'd, ye cedars, homage pay :  
“ Besmooth, ye rocks ; ye rapid floods, give way !  
“ The Saviour comes ! by antient bards foretold :  
“ Hear him, ye deaf, and, all ye blind, behold.”

Upon the whole, it is not too much to say of these pastorals, that though they are *professedly* imitations of the antients ; yet there are few passages, which our poet has borrowed, without improving them ; as the reader may judge by comparing the imitations with the originals,

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† Sir Richard Steele, in one of his letters to our author, speaking of his eclogue, says,——“ I have turned to every verse and chapter, and think you have preserved the sublime heavenly spirit throughout the whole.”



which are collected by the learned editor of his works \*. Some instances of imitation however, seem to have escaped his recollection. The 84th line in particular, of the 4th pastoral †, on winter ;

“ Thy name, thy honour, and thy praise shall  
“ live † !”

is an imitation, or rather indeed, a literal translation of the following line in Virgil——

“ *Semper bonus, nomenque tuum, laudesque manebunt.*”

\* The present Bishop of Gloucester.

† This, which was our author's favourite pastoral, was written to the memory of Mrs. Tempest, a lady of an antient family in Yorkshire, and particularly admired by our author's friend Mr. Walsh ; who having celebrated her in a pastoral elegy, desired his friend to do the same, as appears from one of his letters, where he says,—“ Your last eclogue being on the same subject with that of mine on Mrs. Tempest's death, I should take it very kindly in you to give it a little turn, as if it were to the memory of the same lady, if they were not written for some particular woman, whom you would make immortal. You may take occasion to shew the difference between poets mistresses, and other men's.” The death of this lady having happened on the night of the great storm in 1703, gave a propriety to his eclogue, which in its general turn alludes to it.

‡ It is observable, that the same line occurs, with little variation, towards the conclusion of the third canto of the Rape of the Lock——

“ So long my honour, name, and praise shall live.”

These



These pastorals were so much admired, that they brought our poet acquainted with the most eminent men of that time. Sir William Trumball, who was his zealous patron, first shewed them to Mr. Wycherley, who communicated them to Mr. Walsb, the author of many pieces both in prose and verse, and esteemed by Mr. Dryden, to have been one of the best critics of his age. He was so delighted with them, that, in his letter to Mr. Wycherley, he says—"The author seems to have a particular genius for this kind of poetry, and a judgment that far exceeds his years. He has taken very freely from the antients, but what he has mixed of his own with theirs, is no way inferior to what he has taken from them. It is not flattery to say that Virgil had written nothing so good at his age. The preface is very learned and judicious; and the verses very tender and easy. I shall take it as a favour, if you will bring me acquainted with him."

Lord Lansdown likewise, about the same time, mentioning the youth of our poet, says (in a printed letter of the Character of Mr. Wycherley) that "if he goes on as he hath begun in the pastoral way, as Virgil first tried his strength, we may hope to see English poetry vie with the Roman."

These pastorals also passed through the hands of Dr. Garth, Lord Halifax, Lord Somers, Mr. Mainwaring and several others, who all gave our author the greatest encouragement.

Not-



Notwithstanding the early time of their production, our author himself esteemed these as the most correct in the versification, and musical in the numbers, of all his works; being conscious, as we may learn from his preface, how much their excellence depended on those niceties; in which he appears, even then, to have had uncommon skill: for in one of his letters to Mr. Walsh about this time, we find an enumeration of several niceties in versification, which perhaps have never been strictly observed in any English poem, except in these pastorals.

Our poet, indeed, seems never to have remitted his attention to the correctness of his versification; to which he was greatly encouraged by the advice of Mr. Walsh, who used to tell him there was one way left, of excelling: for that, though we had several great poets, yet we never had any that was correct; and he therefore recommended correctness to him, as his principal study and aim.

It must be confessed, however, that these pastorals did not escape the malice of criticism, at the time of their publication.

Many, who had not judgment to distinguish what is *rural* from what is *rustic*, imputed to them that they wanted that simplicity, which is the characteristic of pastoral poetry. To ridicule these objections, Mr. POPE privately sent an essay, which was published in a paper called the *Guardian*; and which contained an ironical comparison  
 5 between



between his own pastorals, and those of Phillips. In this essay, our author went so far as to deny that his own had any claim to be called pastorals; adding humourously, that though they were by no means pastorals, yet they were something better.

He pleasantly observes, that neither Theocritus nor Virgil intended their poems for pastorals; "and in that respect," says he, "Phillips hath excelled both Theocritus and Virgil. Virgil, he continues, hath been thought guilty of too courtly a stile. Mr. POPE, he adds, hath fallen into the same error with Virgil. His clowns do not converse in all the simplicity proper to the country: his names are borrowed from Theocritus and Virgil, which are improper to the scenes of his pastorals. He introduces Daphnis, Alexis, and Thyrsis on British plains, as Virgil hath done before him on the Mantuan. Whereas Phillips, who hath the strictest regard to propriety, makes choice of names peculiar to the country, and more agreeable to a reader of delicacy; such as Hobbinol, Lobbin, Cuddy, and Colin Clout."

One would think that the irony in this passage, to say nothing of the rest, was too obvious to be mistaken, even by a Bœotian critic; nevertheless many were stupid enough to imagine it was a serious criticism by Steele, (who received it from an unknown hand.) Nay all at Button's, considered it as such, except Mr. Addison, who saw into the joke immediately; and



and the next time he met Mr. POPE, told him, into what a ridiculous situation he had put his friends; who had declared their dislike of having Phillips so extolled at the expence of another of the club: which is the language Steele had before held with POPE, when he first received the papers.

Some who were weak enough to suppose this comparison serious, thought that it proceeded from a partiality to Mr. Phillips; for whom Sir Richard was supposed to have a personal kindness.

But the real occasion of that ludicrous piece of criticism, was Mr. Phillip's injustice to Mr. POPE. Whether occasioned by the latter's superior talents, or the former's over-heated zeal for whiggism, certain it is, that Mr. Phillips was always industrious to represent Mr. Pope as engaged in the intrigues of the tory ministry; for which he had no other grounds whatever, than the acquaintance and friendship Mr. POPE had with those eminent tory wits Swift and Prior, as also the ministers Oxford and Bolingbroke. But in their frequent meetings, politics never entered among the topics of conversation: And I am warranted to say from the best authority, that Mr. POPE never wrote a political paper in his life.

Mr. Phillips's mean injustice on this head, raised the indignation of some of Mr. POPE's friends, and particularly occasioned the SHEP-



HERD'S WEEK of Gay, in the proem of which, that *simplicity*, for which Mr. Phillips so much valued himself, in his pastorals, is pleasantly ridiculed; as is the naiveté of the incidents of these pastorals in the SHEPHERD'S WEEK itself. Yet, this is remarkable, that they who were not in the secret, mistook Gay's pastorals for a burlesque on Virgil's. How far this goes towards a vindication of Phillips's manner in the construction of his poem, let others judge.

Our bard, nevertheless, was, in general, peculiarly happy in cultivating, improving, and preserving, a friendship with writers of reputation, though he sometimes gave offence by the ingenuous candour and freedom, which he himself so strongly recommends in the following lines——

“ With mean complacence ne’er betray your  
     “ trust,  
 “ Nor be so civil as to prove unjust.”

He particularly disgusted Mr. Wycherley and Mr. Cromwell by this friendly liberty. He was scarce eighteen, when he was so high in the estimation of the former, that he engaged him to correct his poems, which he had published without success, in order to their passing through the press a second time with greater advantage. Mr. POPE undertook this nice office, which he executed with great judgment, and with an honest freedom. But the errors he corrected were so numerous, and his criticisms so just, that



that his old friend was hurt to see his insufficiency so exposed. Being aged and captious, he had not strength of understanding enough left to admire this noble exertion of one of the best offices of friendship, nor to receive it with suitable thanks and gratitude. Nevertheless, though his pride was so much offended that he, for some time, discontinued all correspondence with Mr. POPE, yet his judgment was so far corrected, that he desisted from his design of republishing his poems.

This weak and ungenerous return, Mr. POPE repented with a moderation and dignity far above his years. For when Mr. Cromwell gave him the first hint of Wycherley's chagrin, he answered thus——

“ I may derive this pleasure from it, that whereas I must otherwise have been a little uneasy to know my incapacity of returning his obligations, I may now, by bearing his frailties, exercise my gratitude and friendship more, than himself either is, or perhaps ever will be sensible of.

“ *Ille meos, primus qui sibi junxit, amores*  
 “ *Abstulit, ille habeat secum, servetque sepulchro.*”

In the last visit which Mr. POPE made to him, the breach was openly intimated. “ He told me, (says Mr. POPE in a letter to Cromwell) he was going instantly out of town, and till his return was my humble servant.” Here-  
 upon



upon Mr. POPE finding that this journey into the country was not so instantaneous as was pretended, did not spare to return the compliment. "I beg you," says he, to the same friend, "do what you may with all truth, that is, assure Mr. Wycherley I have ever born all respects and kindness imaginable to him. I don't know to this hour, what it is that has estranged him from me; but this I know, that he may for the future be more safely my friend, since no invitation of his shall ever make me so free with him."

By the mediation of a common friend, Mr. Wycherley was afterwards prevailed on to resume the correspondence, yet it never went farther than cool respect or bare ceremonial.

Mr. POPE, however, has been heard to say, that his old friend never did any thing unjust to him in his life. He used to complain indeed, that he was totally forgetful and somewhat peevish, which now and then occasioned little misunderstandings. But that, nevertheless, they were upon good terms to the last, and that he went to see him on his death-bed\*. But, however

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\* Mr. POPE, in a letter to Mr. Blount, dated 21st January, 1715, relates a pleasant anecdote, which serves to characterize Mr. Wycherley. He had often told his acquaintance, that he would marry as soon as his life was despaired of. Accordingly, a few days before his death, he underwent the ceremony; and joined together those two sacraments, which,  
wife



ever sensible Mr. POPE was of the ill return which his old friend made to his sincerity, yet some time after Mr. Wycherley's death, his poems being republished by some mercenary editor in the year 1728, our author in the following year, printed several letters which passed between them, in vindication of Mr. Wycherley's fame, against some misconstructions prefixed to that edition : and throughout the whole of this misunderstanding, Mr. POPE, though a youth, displayed a most manifest superiority.

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wife men say, should be the last we receive : " For, if you observe," says our author, " matrimony is placed after extreme unction in our catechism, as a kind of hint of the order of time in which they are to be taken. The old man then lay down, satisfied in the conscience of having by this one act, paid his just debts, obliged a woman, who (he was told) had merit, and shewn an heroic resentment of the ill-usage of his next heir. Some hundred pounds, which he had with the lady, discharged those debts ; a jointure of four hundred a year, made her a recompence ; and the nephew he left to comfort himself, as well as he could, with the miserable remains of a mortgaged estate. I saw our friend twice after this was done ; less peevish in his sickness, than he used to be in his health ; neither much afraid of dying, nor (which in him had been more likely) much ashamed of marrying. The evening before he expired, he called his young wife to the bed-side, and earnestly entreated her not to deny him one request, the last he should make. Upon her assurances of consenting to it, he told her, " My dear, it is only this, that you will never marry on old man again." I cannot help remarking, that sickness, which often destroys both wit and wisdom, yet seldom has power to remove that talent which we call humour : Mr. Wycherley shewed his, even in this last compliment ; though I think his request a little hard, for why should he bar her from doubling her jointure on the same easy terms ?"



It is remarkable that our poet had afterwards the ill luck to disoblige Mr. Cromwell by the same commendable frankness and sincerity.

In Mr. POPE's first letter to Mr. Gay, in the year 1712, he says--- "Your Friend Mr. Cromwell has been silent all this year. I believe he has been displeased at some or other of my freedoms, which I very innocently take; and most with those I think most my friends." Now it appears by his letters to Mr. Cromwell, that our poet used to rally him on his turn for trifling and pedantic criticism. So he lost his two early friends, Cromwell and Wycherley, by his zeal to correct the bad poetry of the one, and the bad taste of the other.

The loss of these two captious friends, however, was amply compensated by the patronage and esteem of the most eminent men of the age, which his rising fame procured him. But the uncommon applause which he so deservedly obtained in his early years, did not make him remiss in his application, or negligent in his composition. It served to animate, but not to intoxicate him.

Soon after his Pastorals, he published his Windfor-Forest, which was written at different times; the first part of it, which relates to the country, in the year 1704, at the same time with the pastorals, the latter not being added till the year 1713, in which it was published at the de-  
fire



fire of Lord Lansdown, to whom it is addressed, as may be inferred from the motto\*.

The author of the essay above-mentioned, opens his criticism on this piece, by saying that  
 “ Descriptive poetry was by no means the shining talent of POPE.”

In this premature manner does the essayist censure our poet.—A hard censure, which even his own citations contradict.

He admits, for instance, that though, speaking of old FATHER THAMES, the trite and obvious insignia of a river god are attributed to him, yet there is one circumstance in his appearance highly picturesque, which is——

“ His sea-green mantle waving with the wind.”

He confesses likewise that the relieve upon his urn is finely imagined——

“ The figur’d streams in waves of silver roll’d,  
 “ And on their banks Augusta rose in gold.”

Our critic is farther obliged to acknowledge, that the poet has with exquisite skill selected only those rivers as attendants on Thames, who

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\* *Non injussa cano: Te nostrae, Vire, myricae,  
 Te Nemus omne canet; nec Phoebæ gratior ulla est,  
 Quam sibi quæ Vari præscripsit pagina nomen.*



are his subjects, his tributaries, or neighbours. The passage alluded to, is too beautiful to be omitted.

- “ First the fam’d authors of his ancient name,  
 “ The winding *Isis* and the fruitful *Tame* :  
 “ The *Kennet* swift, for silver eels renown’d ;  
 “ The *Lodden* flow, with verdant alders crown’d ;  
 “ *Cole*, whose dark streams his flow’ry islands  
     “ lave ;  
 “ And chalky *Wey*, that rolls a milky wave :  
 “ The blue, transparent *Vandalis* appears ;  
 “ The gulphy *Lee* his fedy tresses rears ;  
 “ The fullen *Mole*, that hides his diving flood ;  
 “ And silent *Darent*, stain’d with Danish blood.”

The following specimen likewise of pure description may be added to shew how little our bard was deficient in this talent.

- “ In genial spring, beneath the quiv’ring shade,  
 “ Where cooling vapours breathe along the  
     “ mead,  
 “ The patient fisher takes his silent stand,  
 “ Intent, his angle trembling in his hand :  
 “ With looks unmov’d, he *hopes* the scaly breed,  
 “ And eyes the dancing cork, and bending reed.  
 “ Our plenteous streams a various race supply,  
 “ The bright-ey’d perch, with fins of Tyrian die,  
 “ The silver eel, in shining volumes roll’d,  
 “ The yellow carp, in scales bedrop’d with gold :  
 “ Swift trouts, diversify’d with crimson stains,  
 “ And pykes, the tyrants of the watry plains.”

The



The other sports likewise of setting, shooting, and hunting are described with great beauty.

The following lines are finely descriptive, and at the same time pathetic. After having described a pheasant shot, he gives way to the following moving exclamation.

“ Ah! what avail his glossy, varying dyes,  
 “ His purple crest, and scarlet-circled eyes,  
 “ The vivid green his shining plumes unfold,  
 “ His painted wings, and breast that flames  
 “ with gold?”

The following lines in the stag-chase, likewise are inimitably fine.

“ Th’ impatient courser pants in ev’ry vein,  
 “ And pawing, seems to beat the distant plain \*;  
 “ Hills, vales, and floods appear already cross’d,  
 “ And ere he starts, a thousand steps are lost.”

\* The first two lines are translated from Statius.

“ *Stare adeo miserum est, pereunt vestigia mille*  
 “ *Ante fugam, absentemque ferit gravis ungula campum.*”

These lines, Mr. Dryden, in his preface to his translation of Frenoy’s Art of Painting, calls *wonderfully fine*; and says, “ they would cost him an hour, if he had the leisure, “ to translate them, there is so much beauty in the original ;” which probably excited Mr. POPE to try his art with them.



" See the bold youth strain up the threat'ning  
     " steep,  
 " Rush through the thickets, down the valleys  
     " sweep,  
 " Hang o'er their courfers heads with eager  
     " speed,  
 " And earth rolls back beneath the flying steed."

Many other, and more striking instances of Mr. POPE's talent for description, appear in the course of his works, and some will be taken notice of in their proper places.

It is certain, that descriptive poetry can claim but a very subordinate rank in the scale of poetical excellence. As the learned editor of his works has observed, it is the office of a picturesque imagination to brighten and adorn good sense; so that to employ it only in description, is like childrens delighting in a prism for the sake of its gaudy colours, which when frugally managed and skilfully disposed, might be made to represent and illustrate the noblest objects in nature.

Indeed our poet himself thought meanly of descriptive poetry, which he humorously observed was a composition as absurd as a feast made up of saucers: And in his epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot, he speaks slightly of this sort of merit, where he says——

“—Who



“——Who could take offence  
 “ While pure *Description* held the place of  
 “ Sense ?”

Mr. POPE, however, has not failed in this piece to take every occasion of adorning good sense; and he sometimes, as our critic observes, introduces moral sentences and instructions in an oblique and indirect manner, in places where one expects only painting and amusement. Thus we have virtue, as our poet himself remarks \*, put upon us by surprise, and are pleased to find a thing where we should never have looked to meet with it.

Among other specimens of this distinguishing excellence, our critic has candidly selected the following, where, after speaking of hare-hunting, the poet subjoins——

“Beasts, urg’d by us, their fellow-beasts pursue,  
 “ And learn of man each other *to* † undo.”

The manly indignation and generous freedom likewise with which our poet speaks of the ravages of the Norman kings, deserves to be admired. After describing the beauties of the forest, he thus breaks forth——

\* Iliad, b. 16. in the notes, ver. 465.

† *To* undo is unpoetical, and the *expletive* *To* makes the line halt.



“ Not thus the land appear’d in ages past,  
 “ A dreary desert, and a gloomy waste,  
 “ To savage beasts and savage laws a prey,  
 “ And kings more *furious* and *severe* † than they;  
 “ Who claim’d the skies, dispeopled air and  
     “ floods,  
 “ The lonely lords of empty wilds and woods :  
 “ Cities laid waste, they storm’d the dens and  
     “ caves,  
 “ (For wiser brutes were backward to be slaves;)   
 “ What could be free, when lawless beasts  
     “ obey’d,  
 “ And ev’n the elements a Tyrant sway’d ?”

This leads our poet to lament the miseries consequential of such devastation, which he bewails with amiable sensibility.

“ In vain kind seasons swell’d the teeming grain,  
 “ Soft show’rs distill’d, and suns grew warm  
     “ in vain ;  
 “ The swain with tears his frustrate labour  
     “ yields,  
 “ And famish’d dies amidst his ripen’d fields.”

Our poet closes this melancholy scene of desolation, with one of the finest pieces of description that can be imagined.

“ The levell’d towns with weeds lie cover’d o’er;  
 “ The hollow winds thro’ naked temples roar;

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† The last epithet here seems to weaken the force of the former.



"Round broken columns clasping ivy twin'd;  
 "O'er heaps of ruin stalk'd the stately hind;  
 "The fox obscene to gaping tombs retires,  
 "And savage howlings fill the sacred quires."

But the groupe of allegorical personages towards the conclusion, are confessed to be worthy the pencil of Rubens, or Julio Romano. The essayist candidly owns that Virgil, in describing the inhabitants of Hell's portal, has exhibited no images so lively and distinct, as the following living pictures painted by POPE, each of them with their proper insignia or attributes.

"----ENVY her own snakes shall feel,  
 "And PERSECUTION mourn her broken  
     "wheel:  
 "There FACTION roar, REBELLION bite  
     "her chain,  
 "And gasping furies thirst for blood in vain\*."

After the several instances of beautiful description, which our critic himself has applauded, together with others, which will be selected or refer-

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\* The critic assures us he was informed by a person of no small rank, that Mr. Addison was inexpressibly chagrined at this noble conclusion of WINDSOR FOREST, both as a politician and as a poet. As a politician, because it so highly celebrated that treaty of peace which he deemed so pernicious to the liberties of Europe; and as a poet, because he was deeply conscious that his own Campaign, that gazette in rhyme, contained no strokes of such genuine and sublime poetry, as the conclusion before us.



red to, the reader must be left to determine with what propriety it can be asserted that “ descriptive poetry was by no means the shining talent of POPE.” Surely his candour and penetration as a critic had been better displayed in observing “ that the studious cultivation of *descriptive poetry* was far below the poet’s comprehension and sublime genius.”

Our critic is right, nevertheless, in remarking that there are *few* images introduced which are not applicable to any place whatever, and rather descriptive of rural beauty in general, than of the peculiar beauties of Windsor Forest. At the same time it should be remembered, that the forest in its state at that time, afforded but few images which could be peculiarly appropriated to it. No magnificent lakes or cascades, no elegant structures, or other beauties with which royal taste and magnificence has since embellished it, were then appropriated to it. But what beauties were peculiar to it, our poet has described in the introduction of the poem from verse nine to forty \*, and with respect to the other

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\* It is observable that the critic has censured the simile of the following lines.

“ Here waving groves a chequer’d scene display,  
 “ And part admit, and part exclude the day ;  
 “ As some coy nymph her lover’s warm address  
 “ Nor quite indulges, nor can quite repress.”



other images, though they are not peculiar to the forest alone, yet they are so admirably described, that they may be truly said to be excellent in their kind, and to prove that Mr. POPE possessed the talent of descriptive poetry in a very eminent degree.

Our poet's talents, however, ripening daily under the benign and fostering patronage of his noble and ingenious friends, he left scarce any species of poetical composition unattempted, and attempted none in which he did not excel.

His lyric pieces, which he composed soon after his Windsor Forest, have been deservedly admired: and his Ode on St. Cecilia's birth-day, in particular, has been esteemed the most artful as well as the most sublime of his lesser compositions.

Bohours, says he, would rank this comparison among false thoughts and Italian conceits: the fallacy consists in giving design and artifice to the wood, as well as to the coquette; and in putting the light of the sun, and the warmth of a lover, on a level.

This is a fault, however, as he acknowledges, very uncommon in the writings of Mr. POPE: And perhaps the fault here imputed to the poet, is rather owing to a mistake in the critic. It is not the nymph's disposition of mind, to which the chequered scene is here compared, but to the *effects* produced by that disposition, viz. *Sun-shine* and *gloom*: which are *natural*, in the object of *description*, and *intellectual* in the objects of *comparison*.



The first stanza expresses the various tones and measures in music, and is almost a perfect concert of itself. The second describes their power over the several passions in general. The third explains their use in inspiring the heroic passions in particular. The fourth, fifth and sixth, their power over all nature, in the fable of Orpheus's expedition to hell. The seventh and last concludes in praise of music, and the advantages of the sacred above the profane.

The beginning of the second stanza in the opinion of our critic is a little flat, and by no means equal to the conclusion of it. But we might, on this occasion, very properly answer him by a remark of his own in another part, where he says, "If we consider that variety, which in all arts is necessary to keep up attention, we may perhaps affirm with truth that *inequality* makes a part of excellence: That something ought to be thrown into shades, in order to make the lights more striking." It may be added, that this inequality or *flatness*, if our critic chooses to call it so, is in the instance before us rather a beauty than a blemish: For as the stanza opens with describing the power of music in conferring tranquillity and equanimity, it is rather a proof of our poet's skill in adapting his numbers to the sentiment, and it would have been very injudicious to have risen too high in the opening, more especially as the ideas which follow, afford him such an opportunity of swelling into a beautiful



ful climax. But let the reader judge for himself.

- “ By Music, minds an *equal temper* know,
- “ Nor swell too high, nor sink too low.
- “ If in the breast tumultuous joys arise,
- “ Music her soft, assuasive voice applies ;
- “ Or, when the soul is press’d with cares,
- “ Exalts her in enliv’ning airs.
- “ Warriors she fires with animated sounds ;
- “ Pours balm into the bleeding lover’s wounds :
- “ Melancholy lifts her head,
- “ Morpheus rouses from his bed,
- “ Sloth unfolds her arms and wakes,
- “ Lift’ning Envy drops her snakes ;
- “ Intestine war no more our Passions wage,
- “ And giddy Factions hear away their rage.”

Nothing can be more artfully managed than this stanza, nor can any thing be more striking and poetical than the beautiful personifications here introduced.

To talk of the flatness in the beginning of this stanza, is as if a learner in the mathematics should censure the dryness of a theorem, because he does not immediately perceive that fertility and abundance, which spring up from it on profound cultivation. Though our poet be as sublime as Pindar, yet he is infinitely more regular and philosophic: and it was here his purpose to prove that the legitimate use of music is to temper the passions, in support of reason. In the two first lines therefore, this useful proposition



position is delivered, as such always should be, whether in poetry or prose, with great simplicity. But the proof of it, in the various instances of its truth, he delivers in all the sublimity of poetic thought and expression.

But our critic's censure of the following numbers, which conclude the fifth stanza, appears to be better founded.

“ Thus song could prevail  
 “ O'er death, and o'er hell,  
 “ A conquest how hard and how glorious !  
 “ Tho' fate had fast bound her  
 “ With Styx nine times round her,  
 “ Yet music and love were victorious.”

Though in this place a song of triumph must be allowed to be well placed ; by ill luck, nevertheless, the measure has been employed in drinking-songs, which added to the story, which has been as commonly the subject of those songs, throws an air of ridicule on what the poet intended to be serious ; and makes these numbers, as the critic observes, of so burlesque and ridiculous a kind, that one is concerned to find them in a serious ode, and in an ode of a writer eminently skilled, in general, in accommodating his sounds to his sentiments.

He might have extended his censure likewise to the following lines, where the poet describes the grief and despair of the lover, who lost his Eurydice by looking back.

“ Now



" Now under hanging mountains,  
 " Beside the falls of fountains,  
 " Or where Hebrus wanders,  
 " Rolling in Maeanders,  
   " All alone,  
   " Unheard, unknown,  
   " He makes his moan ;  
   " And calls her ghost,  
 " For ever, ever, ever lost !  
 " Now with Furies surrounded,  
 " Despairing, confounded,  
 " He trembles, he glows,  
 " Amidst Rhodope's snows."

A reader of nice ear, will readily perceive that the measure, in these lines, is much too sprightly for the sentiment. The too frequent returns of rhyme, are highly improper for any severe or serious passion : the difference between the subject and the modulation is very sensibly felt \*.

The essayist, however, candidly admits that the supplicating song at the beginning of the fifth stanza is highly pathetic and poetical.

" By the streams that ever flow,  
 " By the fragrant winds that blow  
   " O'er the Elysian flow'rs ;  
 " By those happy souls who dwell  
 " In yellow meads of Asphodel,  
   " Or Amaranthine bow'rs ;

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\* See *Elements of Criticism*.



" By the heroes armed shades,  
 " Glitt'ring through the gloomy glades ;  
 " By the youths that dy'd for love,  
 " Wand'ring in the myrtle grove,  
 " Restore, restore Eurydice to life :  
 " Oh take the husband, or return the wife !"

These images he observes are picturesque and appropriated, and the notes are such as might---

" Draw iron tears *from* Pluto's cheek,  
 " And make hell grant what love *did* seek. †"

Our bard, likewise, composed two choruses in the lyric strain, at the desire of the Duke of Buckingham, to embellish a very bad play which his grace had altered from Shakespeare. They had, as the editor observes, the usual effects of

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† These lines, which the critic has taken from *Milton's Il Penseroso*, are not accurately transcribed. Milton has said more properly, "*down* Pluto's cheek."

It may be observed, however, that the auxiliary verb *did*, in the second line, is extremely inelegant and unpoetical.

I am very far, however, from the presumption of making this remark with the petulant design of carping at the writings of this immortal bard. But though the splendid beauties may more than atone for the blemishes and inequalities of a great genius, yet they ought not to pass unnoticed, lest the reverence which is paid to their authority, should mislead the public taste and judgment, and incline the hasty and injudicious, not only to admire, but to imitate imperfections.



ill adjusted ornaments, only serving to make the meanness of the subject more conspicuous. Nevertheless, they were set to musick many years afterwards by the famous Bononcini, and performed at Buckingham-house.

These lyric pieces alone, are sufficient to prove Mr. POPE's abilities for this species of poetry, and it is to be lamented that he did not prosecute his purpose of executing some plans of this nature, which he had chalked out. But the characters of the managers of the play-houses at that time, determined him, as he said, to lay aside all thoughts of that kind. Other considerations likewise probably co-operated to render him averse from having any thing to do with the stage. He remembered that *Pliny*, or some other antient author, had delivered down to us this extraordinary particular, concerning the construction of *Pompey's* magnificent theatre; that the seats of it were so contrived, as to serve at the same time for steps to the entrance of the Temple of *Venus*, which he had joined to his theatre. The moral poet could not but speculate on a circumstance, where the *λογος* and the *μυθος* of the story were as closely united as the two edifices.

Among other beauties in the lyric pieces under consideration, there is something very bold and masterly in the following lines, where, describing the effects of the arts in Britain, he says —

“ See Arts her savage sons controul,  
 “ And Athens rising near the pole !  
 “ Till some new Tyrant lifts his purple hand,  
 “ And civil madness tears them from the land.”



In the two last lines, there is a happy and noble combination of imagery and sentiment.

But the next chorus affords a beauty of the softer kind, where the poet thus feelingly describes the delights of connubial love.

- “ Oh source of ev’ry social tye,  
 “ United wish, and mutual joy!  
 “ What various joys on one attend,  
 “ As son, as father, brother, husband, friend?  
 “ Whether his hoary fire he spies,  
 “ While thousand grateful thoughts arise;  
 “ Or meets his spouse’s fonder eye;  
 “ Or views his smiling progeny;  
 “ What tender passions take their turns,  
 “ What home-felt raptures move?  
 “ His heart now melts, now leaps, now burns,  
 “ With rev’rence, hope, and love.”

A mind endued with the least sensibility, cannot fail of being affected by the delicacy and tenderness of these sentiments, as well as charmed by the force and propriety of the epithets, and the elegance and harmony of the numbers.

The next piece which falls under consideration, is the *Essay on Criticism*, which, extraordinary as it may seem, was written before our poet had attained his twentieth year; and published within two years afterwards, being as short a time as he ever suffered any thing to lie by him.

It had not probably been published so soon, but for the importunity of his old friend Sir William Trumball, to whom he sent a copy of it, and who  
 was



was so charmed with it, that, in a letter which he addressed to him in return, he concludes thus, —  
 “ All I can add is, that if your excess of modesty  
 “ should hinder you from publishing this essay,  
 “ I shall only be sorry I have no more credit with  
 “ you, to persuade you to oblige the public, and  
 “ in particular, Dear Sir, &c.

This poem, the writer of the essay candidly allows to be a master-piece of its kind, and that notwithstanding the partial commendation of Mr. Addison, who remarks that — “ the observations  
 “ follow one another, like those of Horace’s Art  
 “ of poetry \*, without that methodical regularity,  
 “ which would have been necessary in a prose  
 “ writer,” yet it is evident that the plan is regular, and the conduct of it masterly.

Indeed, it is difficult, as our poet’s learned friend and commentator observes, to conceive any prerogative in verse, to dispense with method and regularity. Besides, in truth, our poet laid the plan, and digested all the matter in prose; and then, as he has been heard to say, he turned it into verse with great rapidity.

The general order and design of this work is fully delineated in the admirable commentary subjoined to it. But it would not be consistent with the professed plan of this history, should I omit to point out its most distinguished beauties and defects, which cannot be done, without giving a short analysis of the poet’s chain of argument:

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\* That Horace attended to method in his Art of Poetry, has been shewn by a learned critic. See Mr. Hurd’s comment on the Epistle to the Pisos.



and I cannot help thinking it a capital objection to the *essay* above-mentioned on Mr. POPE's *writings*, &c. that the essayist frequently only selects detached passages, as the foundation of his encomium or censure, without attempting to connect the sense. Unless we recollect the writer's general scope of reasoning, we cannot always fully relish the beauties of particular parts, more especially in Mr. POPE, who has the particular skill to employ poetical ornament in aid of his arguments. Add to this, that when parts are thus taken detached, we may sometimes impute faults to the writer, which are so only from the partial view we have given of his work \*.

The poem consists of one book, which is divided into three principal parts, or members. The first of them giving rules for the study of the art of criticism; the second exposing the causes of wrong judgment; and the third, marking out the morals of the critic.

Though this piece is intitled simply an *Essay on Criticism*, yet it contains several precepts, equally relative to the good writing, as to the true judging of a poem; which is so far from violating the unity of the subject, that it preserves and compleats it.

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\* To this effect, says our Poet, in the following lines :

“ The critic eye, that microscope of wit,  
 “ Sees hairs and pores, examines bit by bit :  
 “ How parts relate to parts, or they to whole,  
 “ The body's harmony, the beaming soul,  
 “ Are things which Kuster, Burman, Wasse shall see,  
 “ When man's whole frame is obvious to a *flea*.”

The



The poet having in the opening, shewn the use and seasonableness of the subject, he proceeds to inquire into the proper qualities of a true critic.

“ ’Tis with our *judgments* as our watches, none  
 “ Go just alike, yet each believes his own.  
 “ In Poets, as true *genius* is but rare,  
 “ True *taste* as seldom is the Critic’s share;  
 “ Both must alike from Heav’n derive their light,  
 “ These born to *judge*, as well as those to write.”

The reasoning in these lines, as the learned commentator observes, is conclusive; and the similitude extremely just.

It may be necessary, however, to consider this passage respecting the human faculties, somewhat more critically; as it will be of use hereafter, in the attempt to ascertain the nature and extent of our author’s genius.

It has been said that “ *judgment*, when it goes  
 “ *alone*, is generally regulated, or at least much  
 “ influenced, by custom, fashion or habit; and  
 “ never certain and constant, but when founded  
 “ upon TASTE; which is the same in the *critic*,  
 “ as GENIUS in the *poet*. That, in fact, genius  
 “ and taste are but one and the same faculty dif-  
 “ ferently exerting itself under different names,  
 “ in the two professions of poetry and criticism:  
 “ for that the art of poetry consists in selecting  
 “ out of all those images which present them-  
 “ selves to the fancy, such of them as are truly  
 “ beautiful: And the art of criticism in discerning,  
 “ and fully relishing, what it finds so selected.”



Though it may be allowed, that judgment is never certain, but when ripened into taste: nevertheless we must be cautious how we fall into an error, which has been adopted by many writers, who have considered *judgment* and *taste* as things totally distinct: for they appear to be the same faculty, and to differ only in the degree and extent of their application. *Taste* is nothing but *judgment* matured and refined. The faculty of judgment, is born with us; taste is, in a great measure, acquired. Judgment, is the faculty of comparing and separating our ideas: taste, is the same faculty of comparison improved, and applied to works of imagination and elegance.

The man of taste seems at one glance, by a kind of intuition, to discern what is beautiful and elegant; and this has misled many to imagine that taste is a faculty distinct from judgment. But, in truth, we cannot discover what is beautiful, but by comparison: and to compare, as has been said, 'is the office of judgment. Taste, therefore, is the result of repeated, tho' perhaps imperceptible operations of the judgment, by which, we at length acquire that quick discernment of, and habitual relish for, the beautiful.

The excellence of taste, depends on an extensive knowledge in the subjects of the fine arts; and on that habit of comparison, which alone can enable us to discern and *relish* what is truly beautiful. For instance, should a man of good natural judgment who had never seen a picture, behold two portraits of the human figure, daubed upon a sign, of which the one was manifestly a better imitation of nature than the  
other,



other, he would not fail to be delighted with that which had the preference, and to pronounce it beautiful. But should he afterward become conversant with the works of a *Vandyke* or a *Reynolds*, he would discover the uncertainty of his former judgment, and what pleased him before as beautiful, he would then despise as defective. In this sense, we may be allowed to say, that judgment in the fine arts is never certain, but when matured and refined to taste.

At the same time it may be doubted, whether *genius* and *taste* can be strictly considered as the same faculty, differently exerting itself under different names. Genius, as the derivative sense of the word implies, denotes the faculty of inventing, or of forming new associations of ideas; but the business of *selecting* such images as are truly beautiful, seems to be the province of taste; which, as the term imports, is the faculty of discerning, or in its etymological sense, of *feeling* what is beautiful.

It is as usual, and perhaps as proper, to say a *writer* of taste, as a *critic* of taste: and it seems easy to conceive a writer of *genius*, that is, of strong creative powers, without *taste* to *select* such images as are truly beautiful, from the group which throng before him. This defect is sometimes, perhaps oftenest, observable in writers of the greatest genius; and seems to arise from too quick a sensibility, which causes the novelty of various images, to make such a



powerful impresson on their minds, as to prevent the timely interposition of judgment, to dissipate the charm which misleads them in their choice. But though taste is spoiled by too exquisite a sensibility, yet without a certain degree of it, neither taste nor genius can exist. They spring from the same common stock; sensibility is the root of both: and though both may be improved and refined by exercise, yet the seeds of each are sown by nature.

The poet himself, indeed, seems to have had the distinctions in view which I would endeavour to point out. He says;

- “ Authors are partial to their *wit*, 'tis true,  
 “ But are not Critics to their *judgment* too?  
 “ Yet if we look more closely, we shall find  
 “ Most have the seeds of judgment in their  
     “ mind:  
 “ Nature affords at least a glimm'ring light;  
 “ The lines, tho' touch'd but faintly, are  
     “ drawn right.”

Taking these lines, and those before quoted together, it should seem from the context, that the poet uses judgment and taste, as two words denoting degrees of the same faculty, and that he considers genius as something distinct from both.

Among the causes which prevent the due culture of the seeds of judgment, our Author reckons



reckons false learning, false reasoning, false wit, and false politeness: on which he farther expatiates in the second part. Against false wit, which is the most frequent cause of a perversion of judgment, he is particularly severe.

“ Some have at first for Wits, then Poets past,  
“ Turn’d Critics next, and prov’d plain fools  
“ at last.

“ Some neither can for Wits nor Critics pass,  
“ As heavy mules are neither horse nor ass.

“ Those half-learn’d wittlings, num’rous in  
“ our isle,

“ As half-form’d insects on the banks of Nile;

“ Unfinish’d things, one knows not what to call,

“ Their generation’s so equivocal.”

Nothing can be more keen and sarcastic than these lines, in which the images are most happily chosen to heighten the satire.

He next proceeds to deliver the precepts of criticism, recommending it to the critic in the first place to examine his own strength: nature he observes has set fixed limits to the human faculties—The lines by which he expresses this sentiment are incomparable.

“ Nature to all things fix’d the limits fit,  
“ And wisely curb’d proud man’s pretending  
“ wit.

“ As on the land while here the ocean gains,

“ In other parts it leaves wide sandy plains;

“ Thus



“ Thus in the soul while *memory* prevails,  
 “ The solid pow’r of *understanding* fails ;  
 “ Where beams of warm *imagination* play,  
 “ The memory’s soft figures melt away.  
 “ One science only will one genius fit ;  
 “ So vast is art, so narrow human wit.”

The poetry as well as the philosophy of this passage, can scarcely be too much admired. How chaste and elegant, yet how strong and lively, is the imagery by which he illustrates the tendencies of the different faculties ! There is peculiar beauty in representing the *beams* of warm imagination, as *melting* away the *soft* figures of memory. Every epithet is so happily adapted, that it is impossible to change a word, without doing prejudice to the image.

Having shewn that *nature* is the proper foundation on which to establish criticism, he points out the aids which may be borrowed from *art*. He intimates that the rules of art were not invented by the fancy, but discovered in the book of nature : and are still nature, though methodized. This he explains by a happy illustration, wherein he gives a just definition of liberty ; from whence we may perceive how essentially it differs from that *licentiousness*, which too often usurps its name and character.

“ Nature, like Liberty, is but restrain’d  
 “ By the same Laws which first herself ordain’d.”



These rules of art, he observes, the critics borrowed from the antient poets, who drew them immediately from nature.

“ Just precepts thus from great examples giv’n,  
 “ She drew from them, what they deriv’d from  
 “ Heav’n.

“ The gen’rous Critic fann’d the Poet’s fire,  
 “ And taught the world with Reason to admire.  
 “ Then Criticism the Muse’s handmaid prov’d,  
 “ To dress her charms, and make her more  
 “ belov’d:

“ But following wits from that intention  
 “ stray’d,

“ Who could not win the mistress, woo’d the  
 “ maid;

“ Against the Poets their own arms they turn’d,  
 “ Sure to hate most the men from whom they  
 “ learn’d.

“ So modern ‘Pothecaries, taught the art  
 “ By Doctors’ bills to play the Doctor’s part,  
 “ Bold in the practice of mistaken rules,  
 “ Prescribe, apply, and call their masters fools.”

There is a great deal of sprightly wit and keen raillery in this passage, in which the poet has drawn his observations from Quintilian; but has skilfully enlivened them, as he seldom fails to do any trite or borrowed sentiments, with all the graces of a splendid imagination.

Our author next observes, that there are graces beyond the reach of precept.

“ If,



“ If, where the rules not far enough extend,  
 “ (Since rules are made but to promote their  
     end)  
 “ Some lucky licence answers to the full  
 “ ‘Th’ intent propos’d, that Licence is a rule.  
 “ Thus Pegasus, a nearer way to take,  
 “ May boldly deviate from the common track.  
 “ From vulgar bounds with brave disorder part,  
 “ And snatch a grace beyond the reach of art.  
 “ Which without passing thro’ the judgment,  
     “ gains  
 “ The heart, and all its end at once attains.”

The *Pegasus* before mentioned, has censured  
 the *Pegasus* illustration; where, as he observes,  
 there is evidently a blameable mixture of meta-  
 phors, the attributes of the horse and the writer  
 being confounded. The former, says he, may  
 be justly said “to take a nearer way,” and to  
 “deviate from a track;” but how can a horse  
 “snatch a grace,” or “gain a heart?”

To this, however, it may be answered, that  
*Pegasus* is here used only as a generic name for  
*poetry*. And the poet evidently intended to  
 have wrote---for Pegasus.---But by saying---thus  
 Pegasus---he makes a *similitude* of what he only  
 designed for the *explanation of a precept*.

Our poet adds, that if we must offend against  
 the precept, we ought never to transgress the  
 end: and that we should, at least, have the pre-  
 cedent of the antients to justify us——

“ Let



“ Let it be feldom, and compell’d by need ;  
 “ And have, at least, their PRECEDENT to  
 plead.”

This must be considered as a precept of *prudence* only, and to avoid censure: for surely it is debasing genius to shackle it with the fetters of PRECEDENT. Irregular strokes, *audacter sumpta*, will always be justified by the natural effects they produce, though there should be no precedent to plead for them. If these effects will not vindicate them, the dispensing *power* of the antients will plead in vain.

It is admirably observed by a writer of true original genius \*, that we might expect to learn the principles of the arts from the artists themselves ; but, says he, they have been too much occupied in the practice, and have sought the rules of the arts in the wrong place ; they have sought it among poems, pictures, &c.---“ But,” he continues, “ art can never give the rules that  
 “ make an art. This is, I believe, the reason  
 “ why artists in general, and poets principally,  
 “ have been confined within so narrow a circle ;  
 “ they have been rather imitators of one  
 “ another, than of nature ; and this with so  
 “ faithful an uniformity, and to so remote an  
 “ antiquity, that it is hard to say who gave the  
 “ first model. Critics follow them, and there-

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\* The author of a Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful.



“ fore can do little as guides. I can judge but  
 “ poorly of any thing, whilst I measure it by  
 “ no other standard than itself. The true stand-  
 “ ard of the arts is in every man’s power, and  
 “ an easy observation of the most common,  
 “ sometimes of the meanest things in nature,  
 “ will give the truest lights, where the greatest  
 “ sagacity and industry, that flights such obser-  
 “ vation, must leave us in the dark, or what is  
 “ worse, amuse and mislead us by false lights.”

Our poet, however, the better to enforce the authority of the antients, endeavours to vindicate them from the presumptuous censure of modern critics.

“ I know there are, to whose presumptuous  
 “ thoughts  
 “ Those freer beauties, ev’n in them, seem faults.  
 “ Some figures monstrous and mis-shap’d  
 “ appear,  
 “ Consider’d singly, or beheld too near,  
 “ Which, but proportion’d to their light, or  
 “ place,  
 “ Due distance reconciles to form and grace.”

This just and striking metaphor, is nicely appropriated to illustrate the sentiment; and is, perhaps, the best apology that can be offered for the seemingly bold deviations of the antients.

Transported with their beauties, he breaks out into a kind of rapturous exclamation, on contemplating the rare felicity of those few who still stand



stand green with bays ; and turns towards their manes, in the following most admirable apostrophe :

“ Hail, Bards triumphant ! born in happier  
“ days ;

“ Immortal heirs of universal praise !

“ Whose honours with increase of ages grow,

“ As streams roll down, enlarging as they flow :

“ Nations unborn your mighty names shall  
“ found,

“ And worlds applaud that must not yet be  
“ found !

“ O may some spark of your celestial fire,

“ The last, the meanest of your sons inspire,

“ (That on weak wings, from far, pursues  
“ your flights ;

“ Glows while he reads, but trembles as he  
“ writes)

“ To teach vain Wits a science little known,

“ T’admire superior sense, and doubt their  
“ own !”

In these beautiful lines, the poet appears, as the commentator strongly expresses it, “ with  
“ the *humility* of a Suppliant at the shrine of  
“ Immortals, and the *sublimity* of a Poet participating of their fire.” There is not, I believe, a stronger indication of true genius, than the enthusiastic veneration with which an early candidate for literary fame, looks up towards those who have reached those arduous heights, to which his ambition aspires. A cold phlegmatic genius, despairing to soar to such an exalted pitch,



pitch, beholds their towering pre-eminence, with languid and unemulating regard.

The rules for perfecting the art of criticism, having been set forth in the first part, the causes tending to impede its perfection are next explained. Of these the first——

- “ Is *Pride*, the never-failing vice of fools.
- “ Whatever Nature has in worth deny’d,
- “ She gives in large recruits of needful Pride;
- “ For as in bodies, thus in souls, we find
- “ What wants in blood and spirits, swell’d with  
“ wind :
- “ Pride, where Wit fails, steps in to our defence,
- “ And fills up all the mighty Void of sense.
- “ If once right reason drives that cloud away,
- “ Truth breaks upon us with resistless day.
- “ Trust not yourself; but your defects to know,
- “ Make use of ev’ry friend---and ev’ry foe.”

The simile here employed to shew the resemblance between an inflated mind and a bloated body, is the most happy that could be conceived.

Superficial learning is the next cause which our author exposes. He advises the critic to

“ Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring.”

At the same time, he points out the labours and difficulties attending the progress towards science, which he aptly illustrates in the following lines.

“ So



“ So pleas’d at first, the tow’ring Alps we try,  
 “ Mount o’er the vales, and seem to tread the  
     “ sky,  
 “ Th’ eternal snows appear already past;  
 “ And the first clouds and mountains seem the  
     “ last:  
 “ But, those attain’d, we tremble to survey  
 “ The growing labours of the lengthen’d way,  
 “ Th’ increasing prospect tires our wand’ring  
     “ eyes,  
 “ Hills peep o’er hills, and Alps on Alps arise!”

The *Essayist* does not seem inclined to applaud this celebrated illustration. The images, he observes, are too general and indistinct: but if the mind, as it enlarges itself in the pursuit of learning, be indeed in the state of a wearied traveller, when entered on the passage of the Alps (as it is surely) could there be an apter similitude? And if, in the description of this journey, the *images are too general and indistinct*, it is the fault of that barren and extensive region, and not of the poet, who must describe what he finds or conceives. But the *Essayist* would have him an INVENTOR at the expence of every other faculty of the poet or the man.

In truth, however, though the simile is, on the whole, very fine and apposite, yet it seems to be spun out to a languid iteration of idea. “ The Alps rising on Alps,” is but an echo of “ hills peeping o’er hills;” and there is too much in these lines of what the French call *Verbiage*: a word which I would not use, but that

G

I do



I do not know one in our own language so expressive of my meaning.

Among other causes which occasion wrong judgment, he reckons a *narrow capacity*; which may be exposed in judging either of the *matter*, or the *manner*, of the work. Of the matter, in judging by parts; or in preferring one favourite part, to a disregard of all the rest. Of the manner, in confining the attention only to *conceit*, *language* or *numbers*.

The poet first exposes those phlegmatic critics, who, not entering into the spirit of their author, take a partial survey, and are curious to detect trivial faults.

“ A perfect Judge will read each work of Wit

“ With the same spirit that its author writ :

“ Survey the WHOLE, nor seek slight faults to  
“ find

“ Where nature moves, and rapture warms the  
“ mind ;

“ Nor lose for that malignant dull delight,

“ The gen'rous pleasure to be charm'd with  
“ wit.

A critic, whose capacity is not sufficiently comprehensive to take in the whole, can never feel the lively impressions with which a warm imagination is smitten on a general survey of nature, and must consequently confine his view to detached parts, which, to his short sight, will frequently



frequently appear irregular. This, however, the poet himself admirably illustrates.

“ In Wit, as Nature, what affects our hearts  
 “ Is not th’ exactness of peculiar parts ;  
 “ ’Tis not a lip, or eye, we beauty call,  
 “ But the joint force and full result of all.  
 “ Thus when we view some well-proportion’d  
     “ dome,  
 “ (The world’s just wonder, and ev’n thine,  
     “ O Rome !)  
 “ No single parts unequally surprize,  
 “ All comes united to th’ admiring eyes ;  
 “ No monstrous height, or breadth, or length  
     “ appear ;  
 “ The Whole at once is bold, and regular.”

There is a most happy propriety in this illustration, and perhaps it will not be too much to say, that there is even a sublimity in it, which excites our admiration of the noble structure which the poet describes.

The folly of making the whole subservient to a part, is pleasantly ridiculed by the tale of *La Mancha* ; which is told with incomparable humour, and is a strong proof of our author’s various merit, which enabled him, with that happy facility, to slide imperceptibly from the gravity of the didactic, to the gaiety of the facetious narrative.

The poet next exposes the limited talents of those who confine their attention to conceit and



wit, which he ridicules by a simile drawn from a sister art.

“ Poets, like painters, thus, unskill’d to trace  
 “ The naked nature and the living grace,  
 “ With gold and jewels cover ev’ry part,  
 “ And hide with ornaments their want of art.”

Having ridiculed the *false*, he describes the nature of the *true* species of wit.

“ True Wit is Nature to advantage drefs’d.”

The drefs which is most becoming, the poet points out in the following beautiful illustration.

“ As shades more sweetly recommend the light,  
 “ So modest plainness sets off sprightly wit.”

This is that delightful simplicity, which adds grace and propriety to all the works of the fine arts : and the poet has shewn great skill in the conduct of these similes, by which the nature, both of true and false wit, are explained by images drawn from the same art.

An extraordinary attention to language falls next under our author’s censure ; and the absurdity of it is finely exemplified in an admirable simile.

“ False eloquence, like the prismatic glass,  
 “ Its gaudy colours spreads on ev’ry place ;  
 “ The



“ The face of Nature we no more survey,  
 “ All glares alike, without distinction gay.”

Imagination cannot conceive any thing more happily appropriated than this simile, to ridicule the fantastic glare of false eloquence.

He then exposes the folly of too great a fondness for the harmony of numbers; ridiculing those who only haunt *Parnassus*, to please their ear: and next gives rules for true harmony, of which the chief is, that the sound should be an echo to the sense; which precept he illustrates by several examples of smoothness, roughness, slowness, and rapidity.

I cannot help thinking, that upon the whole, there is great merit in the following exemplifications; though I am free to confess, that there is great justice likewise in some of the animadversions, made by the ingenious author of the *Rambler*; though others are perhaps rather nice and fastidious.

“ Soft is the strain when Zephyr *gently* blows,  
 “ And the smooth stream in smoother numbers  
     “ flows;  
 “ But when loud surges lash the founding shoar,  
 “ The hoarse, rough verse should like the tor-  
     “ rent roar:  
 “ When Ajax strives some rock’s vast weight  
     “ to throw,  
 “ The line too labours, and the words move slow:  
                     G 3                      “ Not



“ Not so, when swift Camilla scours the plain,  
 “ Flies o’er th’ unbending corn, and skims along  
 “ the main.”

“ The verse,” this author observes, “ intended  
 “ to represent the whisper of the vernal breeze,  
 “ must surely be confessed not much to excel in  
 “ *softness* and *volubility*; and the smooth stream  
 “ runs with a perpetual clash of jarring con-  
 “ sonants.”

But notwithstanding the authority of this criticism, a man may, with good reason, perhaps, be supposed to have a very singular ear who does not discover a peculiar softness, in the first verse; and as to volubility, that might indeed have been necessary, had the poet been describing the rushing of a whirlwind; but why it should be essential in representing the *gently* blowing breeze, is difficult to conceive. *Gentle* and *voluble* are opposite terms, and to have represented the one by the other, would have been a very preposterous attempt. At the same time it must be admitted, that the line intended to describe the *smooth stream*, though there is nothing jarring in it, yet nevertheless, when considered as an example of smoothness, it abounds too much with consonants to render the exemplification striking.

“ The noise and turbulence of the torrent,” this writer continues, “ is indeed distinctly  
 “ imagined; for,” he adds, “ it requires very  
 “ little skill to make our language rough.  
 “ But,”



“ But,” he proceeds, “ in the lines which mention the effort of Ajax, there is no particular heaviness or delay.”

This last censure, however, seems to be ill founded. It is scarce possible to read these lines with any degree of fluency and volubility.

Nothing can be more tardy, nor move with greater prosaic drag, than these lines, which abound with sluggish monosyllables; which are particularly adapted to express the tardy motion of a laborious effort \*.

“ The swiftness of Camilla,” the writer adds, “ is rather contrasted than exemplified. Why the verse should be lengthened to express speed, will not easily be discovered. In the dactyls used for that purpose by the antients, two short syllables were pronounced with such rapidity, as to be equal only to one long; they therefore naturally exhibit the art of passing through a long space in a short time. But the Alexandrine, by its pause in the midst, is a tardy and stately measure; and the word *unbending*, one of the most sluggish and slow which our language affords, cannot much accelerate its motion.”

These remarks, it must be allowed, are not without propriety. But though the Alexandrine

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\* Monosyllables likewise, as Mr. POPE some-where observes, may be happily employed to express *melancholy*.



is in this place rendered faulty by the choice of words, which cannot be pronounced with rapidity, yet if it was composed of epithets which would run with fluency, the Alexandrine would be the measure best calculated to exemplify swiftness; because it would then most naturally exhibit the act of passing through a long space in a short time. It may, on this occasion, be worth remarking too, that though *unbending* be indeed sluggish, and ill-adapted, by its *sound*, to exemplify swiftness; yet, if we attend to the *sense*, it will appear, that nothing could be more happily chosen. It is impossible to convey a higher idea of the rapidity of Camilla's motion, than by describing her to have flown so fast, that the corn did not even bend to the impression she made in her flight. The same happiness of expression is likewise observable in the close of the line, where she is represented *skimming* along the main.

But one of the best exemplifications of celerity, is to be found in the celebrated line of the *Odyssey*.

“ ΑΥΤΗΣ ΕΠΕΙΤΑ ΠΕΔΟΝΔΕ ΚΥΛΙΝΔΕΤΟΛΑΑΣ ΑΓΑΙΔΗΣ.”

Yet, after all, perhaps, the adapting the sound of the words to the sense, is, in most cases, more the effect of chance, than art; nay, I know not whether, in describing boisterous images especially, such adaption is not rather a matter of necessity, than design: for I believe it would be difficult to express such images in words, which  
are



are not rough and sonorous. In short, the skill, in the several instances of adapting the sound to the sense, seems to lie rather in the arrangement, than in the choice of the words.

The last cause which the poet enumerates, as tending to obstruct the judgment, is *Partiality*; which he considers in its various branches, as it begets prejudices against particular things or persons: First, as it induces critics to prefer foreign writers, before our own; the antients, before the moderns——

“ And force that sun but on a part to shine,  
 “ Which not alone the southern wit sublimes,  
 “ But ripens spirits in cold northern climes.”

These lines are very poetical, and convey a just censure of a failing, to which not only the unlearned, to whom the poet particularly applies them, but even the learned, are too apt to incline. When men have bestowed a great deal of time and attention to make themselves acquainted with classic lore, they frequently set too high a value on the acquisition. They are often partial to the merit of the antients, while they disregard excellence among the moderns. Perhaps self-love may induce them, to prefer what has cost them most pains to acquire.

Our author next proceeds to expose the instances of partiality in the learned, such as singularity and novelty, and in the last place expresses  
 his



his indignation against *party rage* and *envy*, for which he had a natural abhorrence. The comparison between envied merit, and the sun eclipsed, is most happily conceived, and the last lines are even sublime.

- “ Envy will merit, as its shade, pursue ;  
 “ But like a shadow, proves the Substance true :  
 “ For envy’d Wit, like Sol eclips’d, makes  
   “ known  
 “ Th’ opposing body’s grossness, not its own.  
 “ When first that sun too pow’rful beams dis-  
   “ plays,  
 “ It draws up vapours which obscure its rays ;  
 “ But ev’n those clouds at last adorn its way,  
 “ Reflect new glories, and augment the day.”

Having exposed those detestable principles, our author next, with an amiable liberality of mind, warns the true critic to be the first to befriend true merit. As our language, he observes, is failing and changeable, the date of modern fame is in its nature short. This he illustrates by a comparison, which is most incomparably fine.

- “ So when the faithful pencil has design’d  
 “ Some bright Idea of the master’s mind,  
 “ Where a new world leaps out at his com-  
   “ mand,  
 “ And ready Nature waits upon his hand :  
 “ When the ripe colours soften and unite,  
 “ And sweetly melt into just shade and light ;  
                                   “ When



" When mellowing years their full perfection  
     " give,  
 " And each bold figure just begins to live,  
 " The treach'rous colours the fair art betray,  
 " And all the bright creation fades away ! "

Nothing, as the essayist candidly admits, was ever so happily expressed on the art of painting: a subject on which POPE always speaks *con amore*, being himself, as will be shown, a practitioner, in that pleasing art.

But if, says our author, any dregs of the sour critical humour still remain, let them be vented against *obscenity* and *impiety*. Here he takes occasion to brand the *fat age of pleasure*—

" When Love was all an easy monarch's care."

There is great merit in the following beautiful lines, in which the poet at once censures the prurient taste of the dramatic writers of those days, and the indelicacy of the fair sex, to whom that taste had ceased to be offensive.

" The Fair fate panting at a Courtier's play,  
 " And not a Mask went unimprov'd away :  
 " The modest fan was lifted up no more,  
 " And Virgins smil'd at what they blush'd  
     " before."

There is a sweetness and melody in these lines, which give the elegance and delicacy of the sentiment, a peculiar relish.



In the *third* part, our author considers the *Morals* of the critic; under which are comprehended candour, modesty, and good breeding.

Without the first essential requisite, he shews that all other talents are insufficient.---

“ ’Tis not enough, taste, judgment, learning,  
     “ join ;  
 “ In all you speak, let truth and candour shine.”

The truth likewise must be communicated with modesty---

“ Be silent always, when you doubt your sense ;  
 “ And speak, *though sure*, with seeming diffi-  
     “ dence.”

To make the truth palatable, it must likewise be offered with good-breeding :

“ Without Good-Breeding, truth is disapprov’d,  
 “ That only makes superior sense below’d \*.”

The poet, having established the foregoing precepts, proceeds to illustrate them by examples drawn from the antients, and opens this part of his subject, with a striking apostrophe, in which he has drawn a finished picture of a true critic.

\* This passage reminds me of a beautiful thought of Dr. Young’s, who says—

“ Good-breeding is the blossom of good sense.”

“ But



“ But where’s the man, who counsel can bestow,  
 “ Still pleas’d to teach, and yet not proud to  
   “ know ?  
 “ Unbias’d, or by favour, or by spite ;  
 “ Not dully prepossess’d, nor blindly right ;  
 “ Tho’ learn’d, well-bred ; and tho’ well-bred,  
   “ sincere ;  
 “ Modestly bold, and humanly severe ;  
 “ Who to a friend, his faults can freely show,  
 “ And gladly praise the merit of a foe ?  
 “ Blest with a taste exact, yet unconfi’d ;  
 “ A knowledge both of books and human  
   “ kind ;  
 “ Gen’rous converse ; a soul exempt from pride ;  
 “ And love to praise, with reason on his side ?”

The poet then answers the question himself, and shews that such critics were to be found in the better ages of *Athens* and *Rome*, and points out their characters, beginning first with *Aristotle*, whom he describes in the following bold metaphor.

“ The mighty Stagirite first left the shore,  
 “ Spread all his sails, and durst the deeps  
   “ explore ;  
 “ He steer’d securely, and discover’d far,  
 “ Led by the light of the Mæonian star.”

With the Stagirite, *Horace* is contrasted, and his character is justly and happily described in two lines.

“ Horace



“ Horace still charms with graceful negligence,  
 “ And without Method talks us into sense.”

That of *Dionysius* succeeds——

“ See Dionysius Homer’s thoughts *refine*,  
 “ And call new beauties forth from ev’ry  
 “ line !”

These verses are censured by the Essayist, not only as spiritless, and prosaic, but as the character they express, is not equal to the merit of the critic whom they are intended to celebrate. Nevertheless, though they do not excel in point of versification, they are fraught with a great deal of meaning. In the first of these lines, on which the other depends, is described that most material and useful part of an able critic’s office, who (like the *Refiner*) purifies the rich ore of an original writer. For such an one, busied in *creating*, often neglects to separate and refine the mass, and pours out his riches rather in *bullion*, than in *sterling*.

I know not whether the Essayist is not too nice in his objections to the character of Petronius, of whom POPE says——

“ Fancy and art in gay Petronius please,  
 “ The scholar’s learning, with the courtier’s  
 “ ease.”

The Essayist remarks, that the chief merit of Petronius, is that of telling a story with *grace*  
 and



and *ease* : But the Poet is not here speaking (nor was it for his purpose to speak) of the *chief merit* of Petronius, but in what his merit *as a critic* consisted, which was softening the art of a scholar with the easy fancy of a courtier. And whoever reads and understands the critical parts of his abominable licentious fragments will see, that the poet has truly characterized him.

It is observable likewise, that though the essayist confines the merit of *Petronius* to the art of telling a story with *grace* and *ease*, yet he immediately adds, “ that his own style is more “ *affected*, than even that of his cotemporaries.” How the essayist can reconcile the *grace and ease* which he admits, with the *affectedness* which he objects to him, I own I am at a loss to conceive.

Indeed the essayist observes, with good reason, that many of Petronius’s metaphors are far fetched and mixed, of which he produces a very glaring instance. But this is so far from contradicting POPE’s judgment of him, that it rather tends to establish it. Such as write with the court-like ease which Mr. POPE speaks of, are most apt to fall into a confusion of metaphors. It is not the correctness and accuracy, but the fancy and ease of Petronius, which our poet commends, and which in truth the essayist admits.

Our author’s character of Quintilian, also falls short of the essayist’s estimate.

“ In



“ In grave Quintilian’s copious work, we find  
 “ The justest rules, and clearest method join’d.”

Whoever studies and practises *Composition*, cannot pay too much attention to the Institutes of Quintilian, whose rules will lead to perfection in this part of literature. This is amongst the highest praises a critic can *deserve*. And this is given to him, in these two very lines.

Nevertheless, the essayist remarks, that Quintilian deserves a more appropriate and poetical character: And indeed, considering that our author has, in the piece before us, been indebted to him for many of the precepts which he has so admirably illustrated, it is to be wished that his just encomium on the critic’s merit, had been somewhat more amplified. But he seems to have reserved his strength to characterize the great Longinus; whom he addresses with an abruptness, which at once surprizes and charms us.

“ Thee, bold Longinus! all the Nine inspire,  
 “ And bless their Critic with a Poet’s fire.  
 “ An ardent Judge, who, zealous in his trust,  
 “ With warmth gives sentence, yet is always  
     “ just:  
 “ *Whose* own example strengthens all his laws;  
 “ *And* is himself that great Sublime he draws.”

The spirit, energy, and propriety of these lines \*, are equally admirable; and as the

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\* There seems, nevertheless, to be a grammatical inaccuracy in these lines, in making the copulative follow the genitive case of the pronoun.



essayist candidly observes, more suitable to the character of the person addressed, than if he had coldly spoken of him in the third person.

The poet then gives a short, but animated history, of the decline of arts and sciences under despotic power; and observes, that though they afterwards made some little efforts to revive, they were again overwhelmed:—

“ A second deluge Learning thus o’er-run,  
 “ And the Monks finish’d what the Goths  
 “ begun.”

Then he turns towards that second period, in which the true critic again appeared at the revival of letters in the west:

“ But see! each Muse, in LEO’s golden days,  
 “ Starts from her trance, and trims her wither’d  
 “ bays,  
 “ Rome’s antient Genius, o’er its ruins spread,  
 “ Shakes off the dust, and rears his rev’rend  
 “ head.”

These lines are perfectly poetical. With what awful imagery the genius of Rome is represented! Nothing can be finer than this descriptive personification. It is truly sublime.

Nevertheless, the excellence of this composition did not secure it against the malice of criticism. Mr. Dennis, and others, vented their spleen against it; but chiefly Mr. Dennis, a  
 H furious



furious old critic by profession, who took offence at the following lines, where Mr. POPE, after having recommended a generous freedom of advice, and observed, that they can best bear reproof, who merit praise, adds----

“ ’Twere well, might Critics still this freedom  
 “ take,  
 “ But Appius reddens at each word you speak,  
 “ And flares, tremendous, with a threat’ning  
 “ Eye,  
 “ Like some fierce Tyrant in old tapestry.”

It is said that Mr. Dennis took this picture to himself, and upon no other provocation wrote against the essay and its author, in the most absurd and virulent manner: For as to the mention made of him in ver. 270, he took it as a compliment, and said it was treacherously meant, as an inducement for him to over-look this abuse upon his person.

But the awkward apology he made in the preface to his frantic and illiberal critique, at once displays the judgment and temper of the man--  
 “ I can safely affirm,” says he, “ that I never  
 “ attacked any of these writings, unless they had  
 “ success, infinitely beyond their merit.”

Here he avows the true motives of a professional critic; it is not merely the demerits of a piece, but the success of it, which provokes their invidious censure.

Mr.



Mr. Dennis, however, at this time bore the character of an *acute critic* \*; though he was generally condemned as an ill-natured one: And our poet himself was once not without apprehensions from his severity; for being asked by a particular friend, whether he ever regarded what was written against him? he answered, "Never much; only the two or three first attacks: particularly when Dennis first wrote against me, it gave me some uneasiness, but it quickly subsided, when I came to read his Criticism, and found him in such violent rage."

Nevertheless, our poet, with an amiable frankness and candour, acknowledged the justice of some of his animadversions; and in a letter to the honourable J. C. Esq; he expresses himself with admirable temper and good sense, where, speaking of Dennis, he says, "To give him his due, he has objected to one or two lines with reason, and I will alter them in case of another edition: I will make my enemy do me a kindness, where he meant an injury, and so serve instead of a friend. What he observes at

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\* He appears, however, to have been indebted for this character to those (and they are the gross body of readers) who could not distinguish between the *mechanical* part of criticism, which was learnt by the study of the French critics, and that more liberal part which can only be acquired by the *mens divinior*. And had Dennis's turn, on this foundation, been like Mr. Addison's, towards encomium rather than censure, it had enabled him to have written as good a critic on Milton's *Paradise Lost*, as that we find in the papers of the SPECTATOR.



“ the bottom of page 20 of his Reflections, was  
“ objected to by yourself, and had been mended  
“ but for the haste of the press.”

What our author subjoins, affords an excellent lesson for authors in general to suppress their irritability, and to trust their reputations to the judgment of the discerning few, who will not fail to do justice between them and their critics.

“ I shall certainly,” says he, “ never make  
“ the least reply to him, not only because you  
“ advise me, but because I have ever been of opinion,  
“ that *if a book can't answer for itself to*  
“ *the public, 'tis to no sort of purpose for its*  
“ *author to do it.* If I am wrong in any sentiment  
“ of that *Essay*, I protest sincerely, I  
“ don't desire all the world should be deceived  
“ (which would be of very ill consequence)  
“ merely that I myself may be thought right  
“ (which is of very little consequence): I would  
“ be the first to recant for the benefit of others,  
“ and the glory of myself; for, (as I take it)  
“ when a man owns himself to have been in an  
“ error, he does but tell you in other words,  
“ that he is wiser than he was.”

It cannot be denied, however, but this piece, upon the whole, notwithstanding some trivial inaccuracies, may be justly esteemed as a pattern of composition in the didactic way. It was not only admired by every candid critic of taste and judgment at home, but its merit diffused itself  
abroad



abroad, where it was so highly esteemed, that it was translated into French verse, by General Hamilton, which occasioned the following letter from our poet to the translator.

“ If I could as well express, or (if you will  
 “ allow me to say it) translate the sentiments of  
 “ my heart, as you have done those of my head,  
 “ in your excellent version of my *Essay*; I  
 “ should not only appear the best writer in the  
 “ world, but what I much more desire to be  
 “ thought, the most your servant of any man  
 “ living. ’Tis an advantage, very rarely known,  
 “ to receive at once a great honour and a great  
 “ improvement. This, Sir, you have afforded  
 “ me; having at the same time made others  
 “ take my sense, and taught me to understand  
 “ my own; if I may call that my own, which  
 “ is indeed more properly your’s. Your verses  
 “ are no more a translation of mine, than *Vir-*  
 “ *gil*’s are of *Homer*’s; but are like his, the  
 “ justest imitation, and the noblest commentary.

“ In putting me into a French dress, you  
 “ have not only adorned my outside, but mended  
 “ my shape; and if I am now a good figure,  
 “ I must consider you have naturalized me into  
 “ a country, which is famous for making every  
 “ man a fine gentleman. It is by your means,  
 “ that (contrary to most young travellers) I am  
 “ come back much better than I went out.”

The strain of compliment in this letter will be excused, when it is considered that it was addressed, from a young writer, to the cele-



brated Author of the Life of Count Gramont; and that fulsome adulation was, in truth, more particularly the vice of the times.

This piece was afterwards translated into French by other hands, and several versions of it have since appeared in the Latin language \*.

But whatever reputation our author may have gained by this didactic essay, in which he displayed such uncommon compass of learning, such extensive knowledge of human nature, and such strength of judgment; yet, as a *Poet*, he acquired still greater fame by the *Rape of the Lock*. The full force of his poetical talents appears combined in this celebrated piece. All the beauty of description, the richness of invention, the glow of imagination, together with all the sprightliness of gallantry, are here alternately displayed with the most exquisite harmony of numbers: And this may be justly deemed the most excellent of all heroï-comic compositions.

But to have a perfect relish for this excellent piece of raillery, it will be necessary to be apprized of the following anecdotes, which gave rise to it.

Mr. Caryl (a gentleman who was secretary to Queen Mary, wife of James the 2d. whose for-

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\* It was translated into Latin by Dr. Kirkpatrick, a gentleman well known in the literary world. As also by Mr. Smart. There was a Latin version of it likewise made by an unfortunate man, who was executed for *High-Treason*, relating to the *Coin*, whose name I therefore suppress.



tune he followed into France, and author of the comedy of *Sir Solomon Single*, and of several translations in Dryden's *Miscellanies*) originally proposed the subject to our author, in a view of putting an end, by this piece of ridicule, to a difference that was arisen between two noble families, those of Lord Petre and of Mrs. Fermor, on the trifling occasion of his having cut off a lock of her hair. This little liberty was taken too seriously; and though the two families had long been friends, it occasioned a coolness between them.

The first sketch of this exquisite piece, which Addison calls *Merum Sal*, was, as we learn from one of POPE's letters, written in two cantos only, in less than a fortnight, in the year 1711, when he was about the age of twenty-three.

Our author sent a copy of it to the Lady, with whom he was acquainted, and she was so delighted with it, that she distributed copies of it among her acquaintance, and at length prevailed on him to publish it, as appears by the motto \*.

The piece produced the desired effect; for it reconciled the two families, and gave offence to no one but Sir *George Brown*, who often observed, with some degree of resentment, and indeed justice too, that he was made to talk

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\* *Nolueram, Be'inda, tuos violare capillos;  
Sed juvat, hoc precibus me tribuisse tuis.*



nothing but nonsense, in the character of *Sir Plume*.

Our bard used to say, that what he wrote fastest, always pleased most; and the truth of his observation was exemplified in the uncommon success which attended this piece; which was so well received, that he made it more considerable the next year, by the addition of the *Machinery of the Sylphs*, and extended it to five cantos, when it was printed, with an elegant letter to Mrs. Fermor, which is prefixed to the piece\*.

When

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\* He afterwards addressed another letter to the same lady, on her happy marriage, which, for good sense and elegant turn of sentiment, may be so justly deemed a pattern of epistolary composition, that I cannot resist the pleasure of transcribing it.

“ Madam,

“ You are sensible, by this time, how much the tenderness of one man of merit, is to be preferred to the addresses of a thousand; and, by this time, the gentleman you have made choice of, is sensible how great is the joy of having all those charms and good qualities, which have pleased so many, now applied to please one only. It was but just, that the same virtues which gave you reputation, should give you happiness; and I can wish you no greater, than that you may reap it in as high a degree, as so much good nature must infallibly give it to your husband.

“ It may be expected, perhaps, that one who has the title of being a wit, should say something more polite on this occasion; but I am really more a well-wisher to your felicity, than a celebrator of your beauty. Besides, you are now a married woman, and in a way to be a great many better things, than a fine lady; such as an excellent wife, a faithful friend, a tender parent, and at last, as the consequence of them all, a saint in heaven. You ought  
“ now



When Mr. POPE, as his friend and commentator observes, had projected to give the Rape of the Lock the form of a mock heroic poem, he was obliged to provide it with its machinery. For as the subject of the epic consists of two parts, the *metaphysical* and the *civil*; so this mock epic, which is of the satiric kind, and receives its grace from the ludicrous mimicry of the other's pomp and solemnity, was to have the like composition: And as the *civil* part is intentionally debased by the choice of some trifling action, so should the *metaphysical*, by the application of some very extravagant system. A rule which, though neither *Boileau* nor *Garth* had been careful enough to attend to, our author's good sense would not suffer him to overlook; and that sort of machinery which his judgment taught him was only fit for his use, his admirable *invention* soon supplied. There was but one system in all nature that was to his purpose, the *Rosicrucian Philosophy*: And this, by the effort of a well

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“ now to hear nothing, but that which is all you ever de-  
 “ fired to hear, (whatever others may have spoken to you)  
 “ I mean truth; and it is with the utmost that I assure you,  
 “ no friend you have, can more rejoice in any good that  
 “ befalls you, is more sensibly delighted with the prospect  
 “ of your future happiness, or more unfeignedly desires a  
 “ long continuance of it.

“ I hope you will think it but just, that a man, who will  
 “ certainly be spoken of as your admirer after he is dead,  
 “ may have the happiness, while he is living, to be esteemed

Yours, &c.

directed



directed imagination, he presently seized upon. The fanatic alchemists, in their search after the great secret, had invented a means altogether suitable to their end. It was a kind of theological philosophy, made up in a mixture of almost equal parts of Pagan Platonism, Christian Quietism, and the Jewish Cabbala: a mixture, monstrous enough to fright reason from human commerce. This system, he tells us, he took it as he found it in a little French tract, called *Le Comte de Gabalis*. The book is written in dialogue, and is a delicate and very ingenious piece of raillery, by the *Abbe Villiers*, on that invisible sect, of which, the stories circulated at that time, made a great deal of noise at Paris. But, as in this satirical dialogue, Mr. POPE found several whimsies of a very high and mysterious nature told of these elementary beings, which were unfit to come into the machinery of such a sort of poem, he has, in their stead, with great judgment, introduced the legendary stories of *Guardian Angels*, and the nursery tales of the Fairies, and artfully accommodated them to the rest of the *Rosicrucian system*. To this artful address, he seems to have referred, in the two following lines.

“ If e’er one Vision touch’d thy infant thought  
 “ Of all the Nurse, and all the Priest have  
 “ taught.”

Thus, by the most beautiful invention imaginable, he has contrived, that, as in the serious epic, the popular belief supports the machinery;



chinery; so in his mock epic, the machinery, taken from a circumstance the most humiliating to reason, in all philosophical fanaticism, should be employed to dismount learned pride and arrogance.

The invention of the machinery, which is skilfully interwoven in proper places, without the least appearance of being awkwardly patched together, was esteemed by Mr. POPE himself as the highest effort of his poetical art: And it is admitted by all critics, though perhaps somewhat invidiously, that it is in this piece POPE principally appears as a POET; having in this displayed more imagination, than in all his other works taken together. It should, however, be remembered, it is added by the essayist before-mentioned, "that he was not the first former and creator of those beautiful machines, the *Sylphs*, on which his claim to imagination is chiefly founded. He found them existing ready to his hand, but has indeed employed them with singular judgment and artifice." With what justice and consistency the critic makes this drawback on the portion of praise he thought proper to allow Mr. POPE, I shall examine when I consider the general nature and extent of his genius.

In the mean time, as I trust it will be no unwelcome amusement to the reader, I shall select some of the most striking passages to exemplify the general excellencies I have ventured to ascribe to this piece.

Our



Our poet, in the opening, shews much address in making Belinda's guardian Sylph forewarn her of some impending danger: and in disclosing to her the mystery of superintending aerial spirits, he ridicules female credulity with a great deal of pleasant raillery.

“ Some secret Truths, from learned pride  
 “ conceal'd,  
 “ To Maids alone, and Children are reveal'd:  
 “ What tho' no credit doubting Wits may  
 “ give?  
 “ The Fair and Innocent shall still believe.”

He likewise touches on female vanities, with much delicacy and good humour, and displays great fancy in describing the transformation of women of different dispositions, into different sorts of spirits.—

“ Think not when Woman's transient breath  
 “ is fled,  
 “ That all her Vanities at once are dead;

\* \* \* \* \*

“ For when the Fair in all their pride expire,  
 “ To their first elements their Souls retire.  
 “ The Sprites of fiery Termagants, in Flame,  
 “ Mount up and take a Salamander's name.  
 “ Soft yielding minds to Water glide away,  
 “ And sip, with Nymphs, their elemental  
 “ Tea,

“ The



“ The graver Prude sinks downward to a  
 “ Gnome,  
 “ In search of mischief still on Earth to roam.  
 “ The light Coquettes in Sylphs aloft repair,  
 “ And sport and flutter in the fields of Air.”

Besides the delicate strokes of Satire and play of imagination exhibited in these lines, they afford, as the editor observes, a beautiful fiction on the platonic theology, of the continuance of the passions in *another state*, when the mind, before its leaving *this*, has not been well purified by philosophy.

There is great elegance and richness of fancy in the account which the Sylph gives of the influence which these superintending spirits have over female conduct, and there is a peculiar ease and pleasantry in the following lines, which ridicule affectation and coquetry.

“ ’Tis these that early taint the female soul,  
 “ Instruct the eyes of young Coquettes to roll,  
 “ Teach Infant-cheeks a bidden blush to know,  
 “ And little hearts to flutter at a Beau.”

The description of the toilette is in the true mock-heroic stile, and is inimitable in its kind.

Homer, as the Essayist remarks, does not describe the armour of Achilles with more pomp and sublimity, than our poet dignifies the various apparatus employed in attiring Belinda ; and the more to heighten the importance of the  
 subject,



subject, the aerial train exercise their several functions in decorating the heroine.

“ The busy Sylphs surround their darling  
 “ care,  
 “ These set the head, and those divide the hair,  
 “ Some fold the sleeve, while others plait the  
 “ gown ;  
 “ And Betty’s prais’d for labours not her  
 “ own.”

The ensuing Canto opens with the scene on the Thames, which is perfectly gay and riant.—Belinda’s charms, above all, are painted with a rapturous glow of imagination. There is great wit and gallantry, as well as exquisite sensibility, in these two lines.

“ On her white breast a sparkling Cross she  
 “ wore,  
 “ Which Jews might kiss, and Infidels adore.”

Here the *Lock*, which is the subject of the poem, is introduced with great propriety and judgment: and the sacrifice which the Baron makes to obtain it, is well conceived, and appropriated to exalt the mock dignity of the subject. He is described as having adored every power——

“ But chiefly Love----to Love an Altar built,  
 “ Of twelve vast French Romances, neatly  
 “ gilt.



“ There lay three garters, half a pair of  
 “ gloves ;  
 “ And all the trophies of his former loves ;  
 “ With tender billet-doux he lights the pyre,  
 “ And breathes three am’rous sighs to raise  
 “ the fire.”

The guardian sylph, anxious for Belinda’s fate, calls together his aerial spirits, who are imaged with a fancy at once luxuriant and poetical.

“ Some to the sun their insect-wings unfold,  
 “ Waft on the breeze, or sink in clouds of  
 “ gold ;  
 “ Transparent forms, too fine for mortal sight,  
 “ Their fluid bodies half dissolv’d in light.  
 “ Loose to the wind their airy garments flew,  
 “ Thin glitt’ring textures of the filmy dew,  
 “ Dipt in the richest tincture of the skies,  
 “ Where light disports in ever-mingling dies ;  
 “ While ev’ry beam new transient colours  
 “ flings,  
 “ Colours that change whenc’er they wave  
 “ their wings.”

The enumeration, likewise, of the various tasks assigned to these aerial sprites, displays the same richness of imagination, together with a wildness of imagery which is admirable.

“ Some in the fields of purest Ether play,  
 “ And bask and whiten in the blaze of day.  
 “ Some



" Some guide the courſe of wand'ring orbs on  
 " high,  
 " Or roll the planets thro' the boundleſs ſky.  
 " Some leſs refin'd, beneath the moon's pale  
 " light  
 " Purſue the ſtars that ſhoot athwart the night,  
 " Or ſuck the miſts in groſſer air below,  
 " Or dip their pinions in the painted bow,  
 " Or brew fierce tempeſts on the wat'ry main,  
 " Or o'er the glebe diſtil the kindly rain."

In the lines which ſucceed, the poet has inimitably contrived to intermix the moſt delicate raillery, with the moſt beautiful imagery and perfect harmony of numbers.

" Our humbler province is to tend the Fair,  
 " Not a leſs pleaſing, tho' leſs glorious care;  
 " To ſave the powder from too rude a gale,  
 " Nor let th' imprifon'd eſſences exhale;  
 " To draw freſh colours from the vernal  
 " flow'rs;  
 " To ſteal from Rainbows, ere they drop in  
 " ſhow'rs,  
 " A brighter waſh; to curl their waving hairs,  
 " Aſſiſt their bluſhes, and inſpire their airs;  
 " Nay oft, in dreams, invention we beſtow,  
 " To change a Flounce, or add a Furbelow."

There is great humour and addreſs in the conjectures which the ſylph makes reſpecting the impending ill; where ſerious and light miſchances, are artfully and pleaſantly contraſted,  
 and



and convey an oblique Satire on the female estimate of the disasters which surround them.

“ Whether the nymph shall break Diana’s law,  
 “ Or some frail China jar receive a flaw;  
 “ Or stain her honour, or her new brocade;  
 “ Forget her pray’rs, or miss a masquerade;  
 “ Or lose her heart, or necklace, at a ball;  
 “ Or whether Heav’n has doom’d that Shock  
 “ must fall.”

But our poet no where displays more poetical fancy, than where he assigns to these spirits their respective charges about Belinda’s person.

“ Haste then, ye spirits ! to your charge repair :  
 “ The flutt’ring fan be *Zephyretta*’s care ;  
 “ The drops to thee, *Brillante*, we consign;  
 “ And, *Momentilla*, let the watch be thine;  
 “ Do thou, *Crispissa*, tend her fav’rite Lock ;  
 “ Ariel himself shall be the guard of Shock.”

The solemnity with which this charge is given and the ingenuity with which the poet has appropriated names to the several spirits, correspondent with the various offices they are destined to discharge, is truly admirable\* : and

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\* It had, perhaps, been better, however, if Ariel, the chief of the aerial train, had himself taken some charge about Belinda’s person; the care of the favourite Lock had been worthy of his superintendence, and he might have entrusted the Lap-dog to some subaltern *Sprite*.



nothing can excel the poignant raillery which immediately follows on the hoop petticoat.

“ To fifty chosen Sylphs, of special note,  
 “ We trust th’ important charge, the Petticoat :  
 “ Oft have we known that seven-fold fence to  
     “ fail,  
 “ Tho’ stiff with hoops and arm’d with ribs  
     “ of whale ;  
 “ Form a strong line about the silver bound,  
 “ And guard the wide circumference around.”

There is a great deal of delicate satire in consigning the care of this important part of female attire to fifty chosen spirits of special note, and the solemn air with which he bewails the weakness of that seven-fold fence, greatly heightens the poignance of the ridicule.

The punishments which Ariel denounces against those spirits, who shall be negligent of their charge, are happily imagined. The implements and furniture of the toilette, as the Essayist has observed, are, with great judgment and elegance, made the instruments of their punishment.

“ Whatever spirit, careless of his charge,  
 “ His post neglects, or leaves the Fair at large;  
 “ Shall feel sharp vengeance soon o’ertake  
     “ his sins,  
 “ Be stop’d in vials, or transfix’d with pins ;  
 “ Or plung’d in lakes of bitter washes lie,  
 “ Or wedg’d whole ages in a bodkin’s eye :

“ Gums



“ Gums and Pomatums shall his flight restrain,  
 “ While clog’d he beats his filken wings in  
   “ vain ;  
 “ Or Alum styptics with contracting pow’r  
 “ Shrink his thin essence like a rivel’d flow’r :  
 “ Or, as Ixion fix’d, the wretch shall feel  
 “ The giddy motion of the whirling Mill,  
 “ In fumes of burning Chocolate shall glow,  
 “ And tremble at the sea that froths below ! ”

There is incomparable merit in raising a subject so trivial by the pomp and dignity of style. But this excellence is no where more conspicuous than in the next canto, where our poet displays all the power of description in the representation of a game at *ombre*.

With what pleasant pomp the king of spades is introduced.

“ With his broad sabre next, a chief in years,  
 “ The hoary Majesty of Spades appears,  
 “ Puts forth one manly leg, to fight reveal’d,  
 “ The rest, his many-colour’d robe conceal’d.”

The same may be said of the King of Clubs, who was taken by the Queen of Spades.

“ The Club’s black Tyrant first her victim  
   “ dy’d,  
 “ Spite of his haughty mien, and barb’rous  
   “ pride :  
 “ What boots the regal circle on his head,  
 “ His giant limbs, in state unwieldy spread ;



“ That long behind he trails his pompous  
 “ robe,  
 “ And, of all monarchs, only grasps the  
 “ globe!”

But, speaking of the Knave of Diamonds, our Poet still rises in excellence, and, to the utmost elegance of description, adds the nicest touches of oblique Raillery.

“ The *Knave of Diamonds* tries his wily arts,  
 “ And wins (*oh shameful chance!*) the *Queen*  
 “ of *Hearts*.  
 “ At this, the blood the virgin’s cheek for-  
 “ took,  
 “ A livid paleness spreads o’er all her look;  
 “ She fees, and trembles at th’ approaching ill,  
 “ Just in the jaws of ruin, and Codille.  
 “ And now (as oft in some distemper’d State)  
 “ On one nice Trick depends the gen’ral fate:  
 “ An Ace of Hearts steps forth: The King  
 “ unseen  
 “ Lurk’d in her hand, and mourn’d his cap-  
 “ tive *Queen*:  
 “ He springs to vengeance with an eager  
 “ pace,  
 “ And falls like thunder on the prostrate Ace.  
 “ The nymph exulting fills with shouts the  
 “ sky;  
 “ The walls, the woods, and long canals reply.”

There is great address in making the *Knave of Diamonds* win the *Queen of Hearts*, which conveys a delicate satire on the interested attachments



ments of the fair, who prefer glittering Knaves to the plain Man of Worth. The political illustration likewise of the crisis in a distempered state, is well conceived, and happily adapted.

The author of the essay, I have so often had occasion to mention, very candidly owns, that this description of the game of ombre, is equal, if not superior to the Scacchia of *Vida*; for as *chefs* is a play of a far higher order than *ombre*, Mr. *Pope* had a more difficult task than *Vida*, to raise this his inferior subject, into equal dignity and gracefulness.

There is great merit likewise in painting the scene of the tea-table, which immediately follows, though the same dignity and elegance is not preserved as in the foregoing. The introductory line is particularly faulty :

“ For lo ! the Board with Cups and Spoons is  
“ crown’d.”

The appellations of *Cups* and *Spoons* in this place, are too low and common ; and they ought to have been mentioned with a periphrasis, to have preserved the mock dignity of the piece. Mr. POPE was here unmindful of Horace’s remark——

“ *Difficile est propriè communia dicere.*”

The machinery, however, is here very happily introduced, watching over Belinda while  
1 3 she



she is sipping her coffee ; and the anxiety with which the aerial spirits superintend her motions, is elegantly represented.

“ Straight hover round the Fair her airy band ;  
 “ Some, as she sipp’d, the fuming liquor fann’d,  
 “ Some o’er her lap their careful plumes display’d,  
 “ Trembling, and conscious of the rich  
 “ brocade.”

The sylphs spreading their plumes to preserve the brocade from stains, is prettily imagined ; but our Poet still rises in delicacy of imagination, when he describes their solicitous zeal as the danger draws near.

“ Swift to the Lock a thousand Sprites repair,  
 “ A thousand wings, by turns, blow back the  
 “ hair ;  
 “ And thrice they *twitch’d* the Diamond in  
 “ her ear,  
 “ Thrice she look’d back, and thrice the Foe  
 “ drew near.”

The triumph of the Baron on obtaining the Lock is described in an admirable parody of Virgil \*, in which the Poet has skilfully contrived to intersperse some exquisite strokes of satire and ridicule, on the little vanities and foibles of the fair sex.

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\* “ *Dum juga montis asper, fluvios dum piscis amabit, &c.*”

“ While



- “ While fish in streams, or birds delight in  
 “ air,  
 “ Or in a coach and fix the British Fair,  
 “ As long as Atalantis shall be read,  
 “ Or the small pillow grace a Lady’s bed,  
 “ While visits shall be paid on solemn days,  
 “ When num’rous wax-lights in bright order  
 “ blaze,  
 “ While nymphs take treats, or assignations  
 “ give,  
 “ So long my honour, name, and praise shall  
 “ live !”

In the fourth canto, which opens with the rage and despair of Belinda, for the loss of her Lock, there is a fine opposition of real and imaginary distresses, which form an assemblage at once striking and agreeable.

- “ Not youthful kings in battle seiz’d alive,  
 “ Not scornful virgins who their charms  
 “ survive,  
 “ Not ardent lovers robb’d of all their blifs,  
 “ Not antient Ladies when refus’d a kiss,  
 “ Not tyrants fierce that unrepenting die,  
 “ Not Cynthia when her manteau’s pinn’d  
 “ awry,  
 “ E’er felt such rage, &c.

The Poet’s closing the climax with the slightest disaster of all, gives additional poignance to the ridicule in this parody.



There is something very picturesque in the description of the cave of SPLEEN, who is admirably characterized.

“ She sighs for ever on her pensive bed,  
 “ Pain at her side, and Megrim at her head.”

Her attendants likewise, ILL-NATURE and AFFECTATION, are well appropriated. It must be owned, however, that there is nothing very characteristic in the picture of ILL-NATURE; but AFFECTATION is drawn with a masterly pencil.

“ There Affectation with a sickly mien,  
 “ Shows in her cheek the roses of eighteen,  
 “ Practis’d to lisp, and hang the head aside,  
 “ Faints into airs, and languishes with pride.”

The phantoms raised by the vapour which flies over the place, are happily conceived, and expressed in the boldest imagery.

“ Now glaring fiends, and snakes on rolling  
     “ spires,  
 “ Pale spectres, gaping tombs, and purple  
     “ fires:  
 “ Now lakes of liquid gold, Elysian scenes,  
 “ And crystal domes, and Angels in machines.”

The invocation of Umbriel, the Gnome, to the Goddess of Spleen, is replete with agreeable raillery; particularly where he conjures her by  
 the



the merit of his former services, which are enumerated with great pleasantry.

“ But Oh ! if e’er thy Gnome could spoil a  
 “ grace,  
 “ Or raise a pimple on a beauteous face,

\* \* \* \* \*

“ If e’er with airy horns I planted heads,  
 “ Or rumpled petticoats, or tumbled beds,  
 “ Or caus’d suspicion when no foul was rude,  
 “ Or discompos’d the head-dress of a Prude,

\* \* \* \* \*

“ Hear me, and touch Belinda with chagrin,  
 “ That single act gives half the world the  
 “ Spleen.”

These concluding lines convey a delicate compliment on Belinda’s good-nature, and powerful influence.

The vial which the goddess presents to the Gnome, filled——

“ —— with fainting fears,  
 “ Soft sorrows, melting griefs, and flowing  
 “ tears,”

is introduced with great poetical fancy.

The



The speech by which Thalestris endeavours to inflame the rage of Belinda, is admirable, and seasoned with exquisite raillery on the pains which the fair will patiently undergo, to improve their charms.

- “ Was it for this you took such constant care  
 “ The bodkin, comb, and essence to prepare?  
 “ For this your Locks in paper durance bound?  
 “ For this with tort’ring irons wreath’d  
     “ around?  
 “ For this with fillets strain’d your tender  
     “ head?  
 “ And bravely bore the double loads of lead?”

The address with which she works up Belinda’s resentment, by insinuating the prejudice her reputation will suffer by the ravisher’s displaying her Lock, is well imagined: And the exclamation in the conclusion of her speech, displays the most lively fancy, and agreeable satire.

- “ And shall this prize, th’ inestimable prize,  
 “ Expos’d thro’ crystal to the gazing eyes,  
 “ And heighten’d by the diamond’s circling  
     “ rays,  
 “ On that rapacious hand for ever blaze?  
 “ Sooner shall grass in Hyde-Park Circus grow,  
 “ And wits take lodgings in the sound of Bow;  
 “ So ner let earth, air, sea, to chaos fall,  
 “ Men, monkeys, lap-dogs, parrots, perish all!”

The lamentation of Belinda is not less beautiful. With what propriety does she make the  
 2 follow-



following exclamation, which pleasantly expresses her idea of a lonely situation ?

“ Oh had I rather un-admir’d, remain’d  
 “ In some lone isle, or distant Northern land ;  
 “ Where the gilt Chariot never marks the way,  
 “ Where none learn Ombre, none e’er taste  
 “ Bohea !”

It is usual in heroic poems to prepare the reader for some great event, by introducing certain prefaging omens ; and the poet has artfully introduced such portentous signs, as serve to keep up the mock dignity of the piece, and, at the same time, throw an oblique raillery on the trivial objects of female superstition.

\* \* \* \* \*

“ Thrice from my trembling hand the patch  
 “ box fell ;  
 “ The tott’ring China shook without a wind,  
 “ Nay Poll sat mute, and Shock was most  
 “ unkind !”

The speech of the grave *Clarissa*, in the last canto, who endeavours to compose the resentment of *Belinda*, cannot be too much admired. There is so much excellent good sense, fraught with such useful moral, and expressed with such harmony of numbers, that no reader of sentiment and taste will think the following quotation too long.

“ Say,



- “ Say, why are Beauties prais’d and honour’d  
 “ most,  
 “ The wise man’s passion, and the vain man’s  
 “ toast ?  
 “ Why deck’d with all that land and sea afford,  
 “ Why Angels call’d, and Angel-like ador’d ?  
 “ Why round our coaches crowd the white-  
 “ glov’d Beaux,  
 “ Why bows the side-box from its inmost  
 “ rows ?  
 “ How vain are all these glories, all our pains,  
 “ Unless good sense preserves what beauty  
 “ gains:  
 “ That men may say, when we the front-box  
 “ grace,  
 “ Behold the first in virtue as in face !  
 “ Oh ! if to dance all night, and dress all day,  
 “ Charm’d the small-pox, or chac’d old age  
 “ away ;  
 “ Who would not scorn what housewife’s cares  
 “ produce,  
 “ Or who would learn one earthly thing of  
 “ use ?  
 “ To patch, nay ogle, might become a Saint,  
 “ Nor could it sure be such a sin to paint.  
 “ But since, alas ! frail beauty must decay,  
 “ Curl’d or uncurl’d, since Locks will turn to  
 “ grey ;  
 “ Since painted, or not painted, all shall fade,  
 “ And she who scorns a man, must die a maid ;  
 “ What then remains but well our power to  
 “ use,  
 “ And keep good-humour still whate’er we  
 “ lose ?

“ And



“ And trust me, dear ! good-humour can  
     “ prevail,  
 “ When airs, and flights, and screams, and  
     “ scolding fail.  
 “ Beauties in vain their pretty eyes may roll ;  
 “ Charms strike the sight, but Merit wins the  
     “ foul.”

The poet, with great address, makes this incomparable speech pass unapplauded——

“ Belinda frown’d, Thalestris call’d her  
     “ *Prude.*”

By which delicate stroke, the poet obliquely satirizes the light part of the sex ; among whom good sense and decorum is ridiculed as prudery.

Clarissa’s speech having no effect, the attack begins for the recovery of the Lock. The essayist above-mentioned is of opinion, that this battle is described in very lofty and pompous terms : A game of Romps, he adds, was never so dignified before.

In this, however, I cannot agree with him. Impartiality obliges me to confess, that I do not esteem this description equal to the rest of the poem. Nor can I wholly agree with the essayist that the weapons made use of are the most proper imaginable ; such as the lightning of the lady’s eyes, intolerable frowns, a pinch of snuff and a bodkin. Of the two last, indeed, the poet has very ingeniously availed himself ; but the  
former,



former, after having been hackneyed by every whining love-sick sonneteer, are become too trite and common to afford any new and striking images, even from the pen of POPE. Witness the following lines.

“ When bold Sir Plume had drawn Clarissa  
 “ down,  
 “ Chloe step’d in, and kill’d him with a frown ;  
 “ She smil’d to see the doughty hero slain,  
 “ But, at her smile, the Beau reviv’d again.”

These lines might pass uncensured, and might even be deemed pretty in an indifferent poet ; but the sentiments and expressions are too common-placed to be applauded in a genius : And this description, upon the whole, does not seem to be exalted to that height of mock dignity, to which Mr. POPE’s talents were capable of raising it.

It must be admitted, however, that he shews great address, where he described Belinda throwing snuff at the Baron, where the machinery is again artfully introduced.

“ The Gnomes direct, to ev’ry atom just,  
 “ The pungent grains of titillating dust.”

The last line affords an instance of a very beautiful periphrasis.

The poet shews great management in the catastrophe of the piece. The Lock, the reco-  
 very



very of which was the end of all this contest, is lost; which occasions various conjectures concerning the place of its concealment, and gives the poet an opportunity of making a very ingenious application of that celebrated fiction of *Ariosto*, that all things lost on earth are treasured in the moon, wherein he has introduced a great deal of keen satire.

- " Some thought it mounted to the Lunar sphere,  
 " Since all things lost on earth are treasur'd  
     " there.  
 " There Heros' wits are kept in pond'rous  
     " vases,  
 " And Beaux in snuff-boxes and tweezer-  
     " cases.  
 " There broken vows, and death-bed alms are  
     " found,  
 " And lovers' hearts with ends of ribband  
     " bound,  
 " The courtier's promises, and sick men's  
     " pray'rs,  
 " The smiles of harlots, and the tears of heirs,  
 " Cages for gnats; and chains to yoke a flea,  
 " Dry'd butterflies, and tomes of casuistry."

The Lock, however, is at length discovered in the skies, where it is lodged with great poetical fancy; and, like *Berenice's*, becomes a constellation. The poet does not suffer the reader to lose sight of his beautiful machinery: The Sylphs, who had been so assiduous to preserve it, are finally introduced as viewing it with delight, while it ascends to heaven.

" The



“ The Sylphs behold it kindling as it flies,  
 “ And pleas’d pursue its progress through the  
 “ skies.”

The poet preserves the vigour of his poetical fancy to the last. Even after the favourite Lock is transformed into a constellation, he, with inimitable pleasantry, describes the influence it will have on the sons of earth.

“ This the Beau monde shall from the Mall  
 “ survey,  
 “ And hail with music its propitious ray ;  
 “ This the blest Lover shall for Venus take,  
 “ And send up vows from Rosamonda’s lake :  
 “ This Partridge soon shall view in cloudless  
 “ skies,  
 “ When next he looks thro’ Galilæo’s eyes ;  
 “ And hence th’ egregious wizard shall fore-  
 “ doom  
 “ The fate of Louis, and the fall of Rome.”

Thus the poet has admirably fulfilled the precept of Horace——

“ —— *Servetur ad imum*  
 “ *Qualis ab incepto processerit.*”

It will scarce be credited that a man could be found so devoid of judgment and taste, or in whom envy and ill-nature were so predominant, as to betray him into a senseless and illiberal criticism on this excellent piece ; and yet that doughty critic, Mr. Dennis, whom I have before  
 had



had occasion to mention, did not scruple to expose his weakness and his malice in the most ridiculous and scurrilous animadversions. His resentment and malevolence so far got the better of the little critical merit which some have allowed him to possess, that he absurdly condemned several passages, for reasons which constituted their capital beauties. Such an impotent attack had the effect which might be expected: It served to render the critic contemptible, while Mr. POPE's fame rose above all attempts to suppress it; and was not confined to his own country: this celebrated poem having been translated into several languages. There was, in particular, a French version of it, which was printed at Paris, in the year 1728. There were likewise translations of it in Italian, by the Abbé Conti, a noble Venetian; and by the Marquis Rongons, envoy extraordinary from the Duke of Modena to the late king. There have likewise been Latin versions of it; and a prose irony of it, made its appearance in English\*.

This

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\* Among the compliments paid to our author on this occasion, we must not omit the Eulogy of Sir William Trumball, who, in one of his letters to our author, says——

“ You have given me the truest satisfaction imaginable,  
 “ not only in making good the just opinion I have ever had of  
 “ your reach of thought, and my idea of your comprehensive  
 “ genius; but likewise in that pleasure I take, as an Eng-  
 “ lishman, to see the French, even Boileau himself, in his  
 “ *Lutrin*, out-done in your poem: for you descend, *leviſſe*  
 “ *pleſtro*, to all the nicer touches, that your own observa-  
 K tion



This poem happened to be published at a time when party contests ran high, and among other subjects of dispute, the famous Barrier treaty was much canvassed, and applauded by the Whigs. Mr. POPE, though too honest and judicious to be a party-man, was nevertheless from his birth and education ranked

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“ tion and wit furnish, on such a subject as requires the  
“ finest strokes and the liveliest imagination.”

Dean Berkley likewise, in a letter addressed to our author, dated May 1st, 1714, speaks of it in the highest terms of applause:

“ I have accidentally met with your Rape of the Lock  
“ here, having never seen it before. Stile, painting, judg-  
“ ment, spirit, I had already admired in other of your  
“ writings; but in this I am charmed with the magic of  
“ your invention, with all those images, allusions and inex-  
“ plicable beauties, which you raise so surprisngly, and at  
“ the same time so naturally, out of a trifle.”

To the testimonies in favour of this poem must be added that of the learned and ingenious author of the Elements of Criticism, who says——“ The Rape of the Lock is a gen-  
“ teel and gay species of writing, less strained than the  
“ others \* before mentioned, and is pleasant or ludicrous,  
“ without having ridicule for its chief aim; giving way,  
“ however, to ridicule, where it arises from a particular  
“ character, such as that of Sir Plume.” He does not scruple to add, that the versification is the most complete of any in the English language.

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\* Meaning the Virgil Travestie of Scarron—The Secchia Rapita of Tassoni—The Batrachomyomachia of Homer, —and the Lutrin of Boileau.



among the Tories, which occasioned the author of a piece, intitled *A Key*\* to the Lock, whimsically to maintain, that the Rape of the Lock was an allegorical poem, written with a view to expose and ridicule that treaty : And taking it for granted, that, by the Lock, the treaty was to be understood, he very readily adapted every part to square with this *postulatum*.

The fame of this poem, together with the agreeable nature of the subject, tempted many witlings and poetasters to play with the favourite Lock, and exercise their little talents for double entendre. These fugitive Effays, the offsprings of a weak judgment and a prurient imagination, are deservedly forgotten. But the reader probably will not be displeased with the following lines, which have something lively in them, though not very poetical, and have never yet, that I know of, been made public.

To Belinda, upon the *Rape* of the *Lock*.

“ Pleas’d in these lines, Belinda, you may view  
 “ How things are priz’d which once belong’d  
   “ to you.  
 “ If on some meaner head, this Lock had  
   “ grown,  
 “ The Nymph despis’d, the Rape had been  
   “ unknown.

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\* This piece of pleasantry was penned by Mr. POPE himself.



" But what concerns the Valiant, and the Fair,  
 " The Muse asserts as her peculiar care.  
 " Thus Helen's Rape, and Menelaus' wrong,  
 " Became the subject of Great Homer's song.  
 " And lost in antient times, the golden Fleece  
 " Was rais'd to Fame by all the Wits of  
 " Greece.

" But yet if some, with Malice more than  
 " Wit,

" Will needs misconstrue what the Poet writ ;  
 " Deem it but Scandal which the jealous raise,  
 " To blast his Fame, and to detract your Praise.  
 " Too bright your Form, and too renown'd  
 " his Song,

" Not to draw Envy from the baser throng.  
 " Whose minds, I know not by what awk-  
 " ward fate,

" Like eyes a-squint, look every way but  
 " straight.

" Nature, to your undoing, arms mankind  
 " With strength of body, artifice of mind ;  
 " But gives your feeble Sex, made up of Fears,  
 " No guard but Virtue, no redress but Tears.  
 " Yet custom (seldom to your favour gain'd)  
 " Absolves the Virgin, when by force con-  
 " strain'd.

" Thus Lucrece lives unblemish'd in her Fame,  
 " A bright example of young Tarquin's shame.  
 " Such Praise is yours---And such shall you  
 " possess,

" Your Virtue equal, tho' your Loss be less.  
 " Then smile, Belinda, at reproachful Tongues,  
 " Still warm our Hearts, and still inspire our  
 " Songs ;

" But



“ But would your Charms to distant times ex-  
 “ tend ;  
 “ Let Kneller paint them, and let POPE com-  
 “ mend.”

Mr. POPE's next poetical composition, was an *Essay to the memory of an unfortunate Lady*, which came warm from the heart, and does honour to his sensibility.

This lady is supposed to have been the same person, to whom the Duke of Buckingham addressed some lines on her intentions of retiring into a monastery, which design is also hinted at in one of Mr. POPE's Letters, where he says, addressing himself, as it is presumed, to this very person: “ If you are resolved, in revenge  
 “ to rob the world of so much example as you  
 “ may afford it, I believe your design will be  
 “ vain: for even in a monastery, your devo-  
 “ tions cannot carry you so far towards the next  
 “ world, as to make this lose sight of you:  
 “ but you will be like a star, that, while it is  
 “ fixed in heaven, shines over all the earth.  
 “ Wheresoever providence shall dispose of the  
 “ most valuable thing I know, I shall ever fol-  
 “ low you with my sincerest wishes; and my  
 “ best thoughts will be perpetually waiting upon  
 “ you, when you never hear of me or them.  
 “ Your own guardian angels cannot be more  
 “ constant or more silent.”

This unfortunate lady, as Mr. POPE very properly calls her, was distinguished by her rank,  
 K 3 fortune



fortune and beauty, and was committed to the guardianship of an uncle, who gave her an education suitable to her expectations; but while she was yet very young, she was supposed to have entertained a partiality for a young gentleman of inferior degree, which occasioned her to refuse a match which her guardian proposed to her.

It was not long before her correspondence with this gentleman was discovered by means of spies, whom her guardian had employed to watch over her conduct, and when he upbraided her with this secret intercourse, she had too much truth and honour to deny the charge.

The uncle, finding her affections so rooted, that she had not power to withdraw them, forced her abroad, where she was received with the respect due to her quality, but confined from the sight of every one but the dependants of this rigid guardian.

Her despondent lover transmitted several letters on the faith of repeated assurances, that they would be privately delivered to her, but his hopes were betrayed, and his letters, instead of being presented to the object of his affections, were sent to England, and only served to render her confinement more strait and severe.

In this miserable and hopeless condition, she languished a considerable time in sickness and  
sorrow,



forrow, till at length she put an end to her life with a sword which she bribed a woman servant to procure her, and was found yet warm upon the ground.

Being, by the laws of the place, denied Christian sepulture, she was interred without the least solemnity, being cast into the common earth, without any mournful attendants to perform the last duties of affection, and only followed by some young people in the neighbourhood, who bestrewed her grave with flowers.

Such a moving catastrophe might have inspired a savage with sensibility; but in Mr. POPE it awakened all the power of the Pathos. With what awful solemnity he suddenly commands our attention, and calls forth all our sympathy, in the very opening, where he fancies to behold the apparition of the bleeding fair.

“What beck’ning Ghost, along the moonlight  
“shade

“Invites my steps, and points to yonder glade?

“’Tis she!—but why that bleeding bosom  
“gor’d,

“Why dimly gleams the visionary sword?

“Oh ever beauteous, ever friendly! tell,

“Is it, in heav’n, a crime to love too well?

“To bear too tender, or too firm a heart,

“To act a Lover’s, or a Roman’s part?

“Is there no bright reversion in the sky,

“For those who greatly think, or bravely die?”



The indignation he expresses against the inhuman guardian is very striking and affecting.

“ But thou, false Guardian of a charge too  
 “ good,  
 “ Thou, mean deserter of thy brother’s blood !  
 “ See on these ruby lips the trembling breath,  
 “ These cheeks now fading at the blast of  
 “ death.”

Then follows a sudden execration, so forcible, that it instantly strikes the mind with terror.

“ Thus, if eternal Justice rules the ball,  
 “ Thus shall your wives, and thus your chil-  
 “ dren fall.”

The poet farther describing the sudden vengeance which shall await such inhumanity, breaks forth into the following bold prosopopoeia.

“ There passengers shall stand, and pointing  
 “ say,  
 “ (While the long fun’rals blacken all the way)  
 “ Lo ! these were they, whose souls the Furies  
 “ steel’d,  
 “ And curs’d with hearts unknowing how to  
 “ yield.  
 “ Thus un’amented pass the proud away,  
 “ The gaze of fools, and pageant of a day !  
 “ So perish all, whose breast ne’er learn’d to  
 “ glow  
 “ For others good, or melt at others woe.”

How



How inimitably has the poet contrived to temper the horror of the dire execrations he vented, by closing with a passage of exquisite humanity and sympathy!

With what inexpressible tenderness likewise, and with what moving accents does he aggravate her deplorable fate, by introducing the affecting circumstance of her dying in a foreign land, unattended by any mournful friend to grace her obsequies.

“ No friend’s complaint, no kind domestic tear

“ Pleas’d thy pale ghost, or grac’d thy mourn-  
“ ful bier.

“ By foreign hands thy dying eyes were clos’d,

“ By foreign hands thy decent limbs compos’d,

“ By foreign hands thy humble grave adorn’d,

“ By strangers honour’d, and by strangers  
“ mourn’d !”

The forcible repetition of the word *foreign*, has, as the critic observes, an admirable effect constantly to recall to mind the aggravating circumstance which the poet would impress on the reader’s sensibility.

There is another, though not so obvious, beauty in these lines. It is observable that in all these lines, except the last, the pause is uniformly at the fourth syllable; and this farther contributes to rivet in the mind the several parts or amplifications of the mournful circumstance which the poet describes. For as an acute  
critic



critic \* has observed, uniformity in the members of a thought, requires equal uniformity in the members of the period which expresses that thought.

In the succeeding lines, the poet has skilfully contrived to blend the most moving sentiments, with a just indignant satire on the modes of affected lamentation:

“ What tho’ no friends in fable weeds appear,  
 “ Grieve for an hour, perhaps, then mourn a  
     “ year,  
 “ And bear about the mockery of woe  
 “ To midnight dances, and the public show ?  
 “ What though no weeping Loves thy ashes  
     “ grace,  
 “ Nor polish’d marble emulate thy face !”

It is difficult to say, whether the pathos of the sentiments, the keenness of the satire, or the beauty of the poetry, is most admirable in these lines.

The poet, with great judgment and address, reserves the affecting circumstance of her being denied the rites of sepulture, with which he closes these moving exclamations.

“ What tho’ no sacred earth allow thee room,  
 “ Nor hallow’d dirge be mutter’d o’er thy  
     “ tomb !

---

\* Lord Kaims.



“ Yet shall thy grave with rising flow’rs be  
 “ drest,  
 “ And the green turf lie lightly on thy breast :  
 “ There shall the Morn her earliest tears  
 “ bestow,  
 “ There the first roses of the year shall blow.”--

What a delicate poetical fancy is displayed in these concluding lines ! In short, a reader of any taste and sensibility, must thrill at every line of this excellent elegy, which produces that sympathetic effect arising from all heart-felt compositions.

The Prologue to Addison’s tragedy of *Cato*, stands next in order among Mr. POPE’s poetical compositions. This, which was written at Mr. Addison’s request, the author of the essay very candidly admits to be superior even to any of Dryden’s. It is, as he observes, solemn and sublime ; and appropriated to the tragedy alone which it was designed to introduce. The most striking images and allusions it contains, are taken with judgment from some passages in the life of Cato himself. Such is that fine stroke, more lofty than any thing in the tragedy itself, where the poet says, that when Cæsar, amid the pomp and magnificence of a triumph,

“ Show’d Rome her Cato’s figure drawn in  
 “ state ;  
 “ As her dead Father’s rev’rend figure past,  
 “ The pomp was darken’d, and the day o’ercast;  
 “ The



" The Triumph ceas'd----tears gush'd from  
 " ev'ry eye ;  
 " The world's great victor pass'd unheeded by ;  
 " Her last good man dejected Rome ador'd,  
 " And honour'd Caesar's less than Cato's  
 " sword."

Such again is the happy allusion to an old story mentioned in Martial, of Cato's coming into the theatre, and presently going out again.

" Such Plays alone should win a British ear,  
 " As Cato's self had not disdain'd to hear."

From whence he draws an artful panegyric on the purity and excellence of the play he was recommending \*.

As

\* When Mr. Addison had finished this Tragedy of Cato, he brought it to Mr. POPE, and left it with him three or four days for his opinion. Mr. POPE, with his wonted ingenuous candor, told him he thought he had better not exhibit it on the stage ; and added, that by printing it only as a classical performance, he might make it turn to a profitable account, as the piece was very well penned, though not theatrical enough to succeed on the stage. Mr. Addison assured him that he coincided with him in opinion, and seemed disposed to follow his advice : but some time after he told him that some friends, whom he was cautious of disoblighing, insisted on his bringing it on the stage. He assured Mr. POPE, however, that it was with no party views, and pressed him to shew it to the Lords Oxford and Bolingbroke, and to repeat his assurances to them, that he did not by any means intend it as a party play.

Our



As this prologue is a model for this species of writing, in the serious way, so the epilogue to Mr.

Our author executed his commission in the most friendly manner ; and the play, together with the scheme for bringing it upon the stage, meeting with their approbation, it was represented accordingly.

Throughout the whole conduct of this business, Mr. Addison appeared to be so extremely apprehensive of *party* imputations, that Mr. POPE having worded the prologue thus,

“ *Britons*, ARISE, be worth like this approv’d,  
“ And shew you have the virtue to be mov’d ;”

he very strongly objected to the boldness of the expression, saying, it would be called stirring the people to rebellion, and therefore earnestly begged of our author to soften it, by substituting something less obnoxious. On this account it was altered, as it now stands, to *Britons*, ATTEND,—though at the expence of the sense and spirit. Notwithstanding this, the very next year, when the present illustrious family came to the succession, Mr. Addison thought fit to make a merit of Cato, as purposely and directly written, to oppose the schemes of a faction \*: his poem to her royal highness the Princess of Wales, beginning in this manner :

“ The muse that oft with sacred raptures fir’d,  
“ Has gen’rous thoughts of liberty inspir’d ;  
“ And boldly rising for Britannia’s laws,  
“ Ingag’d great CATO in his country’s cause ;  
“ On you submissive waits.”

Indeed

\* This play being considered as a warning that liberty was in danger during the Tory administration, Bolingbroke, to obviate the popular impressions it might make, sent one night, when the applause of the audience was very violent, for Booth, who played Cato, into his box, between the acts, and presented him with fifty guineas, in acknowledgement, as he expressed it with great address, for defending the cause of liberty so well against a *perpetual dictator*.



Mr. Rowe's *Jane Shore*, which follows, is as perfect a pattern of composition in the ludicrous way. It was written for Mrs. Oldfield, though never spoken. It is penned in a lively spirit of gallantry, and facetious raillery: which, as is well remarked by the essayist, the audience expect in all epilogues to the most serious and pathetic pieces. It is strange, that though this perversion of taste has been condemned by all judicious writers, that the scandalous practice of closing such pieces with epilogues full of ribaldry and loose double entendre, should still continue.

We are now to consider Mr. POPE in the character of a translator, and to examine his merit in that capacity in his version of the Epistle from *Sappho* to *Phaon*, translated from *Ovid*. This the author of the essay allows to be rendered with faithfulness and with elegance; and that it is so in general, cannot be disputed.

Nevertheless, as I profess not to be the panegyrist, but the historian of Mr. POPE; I can no

---

Indeed Mr. Addison's moderation in party, appears to have been all affected; though he used to talk much of it, and often recommend it to Mr. POPE, adding, that he ought not to be contented with the applause of half the nation. He used to blame Steele greatly for being too much a party-man; and yet, when he found himself that he was likely to promote his interest by party attachments, he entered into them with a zeal which does his memory no credit: for this man of moderate principles, became the champion of a faction, and did not scruple to pen the *Freeholder*.

more



more subscribe to a general commendation without taking notice of such exceptions as occur, than I can admit a general censure which appears to be ill founded. Impartiality, therefore, obliges me to observe, that in some passages the translator does not seem to have preserved the sense or spirit of the original. For instance, Sappho says,

“ ——— *Omniq̃ue a parte placebam,*  
 “ *Sed tum praecipue, cum sit amoris opus.*”

which the translator renders thus,

“ In all I pleas’d, *but most in what was best;*  
 “ And the *last* joy was dearer than the *rest.*”

These lines do not appear to convey the meaning of the original, either with faithfulness or elegance.

The first line is faulty in point of versification; and, to use our bard’s own remarks, ten low words creep in one dull line. Add to this, that the sense in the translation is equivocal; for *non constat* what was best. This may either be taken in a serious or ludicrous sense. Whereas in the original the meaning is precise, and well ascertained by the words *amoris opus*: though it must be confessed that the expression in the Latin, is not very elegant or delicate.

As to the last line it is wholly redundant, and has no place in the original. It may be added  
 likewise,



likewise, that there is an inaccuracy in the use of the word *rest*, to denote *preceding* joys.

The version likewise of the following lines seems liable to censure.

“ *Quique, ubi jam amborum fuerat confusa vo-*  
*luptas,*  
*Plurimus in lasso corpore languor erat.*”

Which are thus translated,

“ Till all dissolving in the trance we lay,  
 “ And in tumultuous raptures dy’d away.”

These lines, it is true, convey all that is warm in the original, but they have not the same elegant turn. For in the Latin, the last line reflects an idea which corrects in some degree the prudence in the former, by intimating that *sensibility* still survived *sensuality*.

It is with pleasure, however, I acknowledge, that, in many passages, the translator rises greatly superior to his original. The following lines, for instance, though very beautiful, are surpassed by the translation :

“ *Ecce, jacent collo sparsi sine lege capilli;*  
 “ *Nec premit articulos lucida gemma meos.*  
 “ *Veste tegor vili: nullum est in crinibus aurum:*  
 “ *Non Arabo noster rore capillus olet.*”

which are thus rendered——

“ No



“ No more my robes in waving purple flow,  
 “ Nor on my hand the sparkling di'monds  
 “ glow;  
 “ No more my locks in ringlets curl'd diffuse  
 “ The costly sweetness of Arabian dews,  
 “ Nor braids of gold the varied tresses bind,  
 “ That fly disorder'd with the wanton wind.”

Neither is the original equal to the version in the following passage :

“ *Scribimus, et lachrymis oculi rorantur abortis :*  
 “ *Aspice, quam sit in hoc multa litura loco.*”

The translator says,

“ See, while I write, my words are lost in  
 “ tears !  
 “ The less my sense, the more my love ap-  
 “ pears.”

The second line in the Latin is flat and languid, but the translator has improved it by an elegant turn of sentiment.

It may be said of the succeeding lines likewise, that they greatly excel the original, though, by the bye, it must be confessed, that they are rather a paraphrase, than a translation of the Latin.

“ *Tu mihi cura, Phaon; te somnia nostra re-*  
 “ *ducunt;*  
 “ *Somnia formoso candidiora die.*



“ *Illic te invenio, quanquam regionibus absis ;*  
 “ *Sed non longa satis gaudia somnus habet.*”

These lines are thus translated :

“ ’Tis thou art all my care and my delight,  
 “ My daily longing, and my dream by night :  
 “ Oh night more pleasing than the brightest  
 “ day,  
 “ When fancy gives what absence takes away,  
 “ And, dress’d in all its visionary charms,  
 “ Restores my fair deserter to my arms !”

There is something inexpressibly fond, tender, and poetical in these plaintive lines. Indeed, the whole translation breathes such passionate and pathetic sentiments, as are worthy of the exquisite sensibility of the celebrated and amorous Sappho\* : and the versification is, in point of melody, next to that of the pastorals. The two following verses, as the essayist observes, in which alliteration is successfully used, are perhaps the most harmonious of any in our language, in rhyme.

“ Ye gentle gales, beneath my body blow,  
 “ And softly lay me on the waves below !”

---

\* She is supposed to have described the violent symptoms attending the passion of love, in so strong, lively and accurate a manner, that the physician *Eristratus* is said to have discovered the secret malady of the prince *Antiochus*, who was in love with his mother-in-law *Stratonice*, merely by examining the symptoms of his patient’s distemper by this description.



But the most pathetic subject for elegiac epistle, is that of *Abelard* and *Eloisa*, who flourished in the twelfth century, and were two of the most distinguished persons of their age.

Abelard was reputed the most handsome, as well as most learned man of his time. An old chronicle, quoted by Andrew du Chesne, informs us, that scholars flocked to his lectures from all quarters of the Latin world : and his cotemporary, St. Bernard, relates, that he numbered among his disciples many principal ecclesiastics and cardinals, at the court of Rome. Abelard himself boasts, that when he retired into the country, he was followed by such immense crowds of scholars, that neither lodging nor provisions were to be had sufficient for them. Being embroiled in controversy, he met with the fate of many learned men, to be accused of heresy ; for, by the influence and authority of St. Bernard, his opinion of the Trinity was condemned, by a council held at Sens, 1140. But the talents of Abelard were not confined to theology, jurisprudence, philosophy, and the thorny paths of scholasticism ; for he gave proofs of a lively genius by many poetical performances.

It is to be regretted that we have no exact picture of Eloisa's person. Abelard himself says, that she was, "*facie non infima*." But her uncommon learning is confirmed by many circumstances. She indisputably understood the Latin, Greek and Hebrew tongues : Her literature, as Abelard tells us, "made her the most celebrated



“ of any lady in the kingdom.” And her literary merit attached him to her more powerfully.

But this extraordinary pair were for nothing more famous, than for their unfortunate passion : and their distresses were of a most singular and peculiar kind. After a long series of calamities, they retired each to a several convent, and consecrated the remainder of their days to religion. It was many years after this separation, that a letter of Abelard’s to a friend, which contained the history of his misfortune, fell into the hands of Eloisa. This awakening all her tenderness, occasioned those celebrated letters, out of which the following poem, which presents so lively a picture of the struggle of grace and nature, virtue and passion, is partly extracted.

The solemnity of the exordium, is admirably adapted to induce a disposition for receiving such sensations as the poet would wish to impress. Eloisa, who is supposed to be surveying the gloom around her, and meditating on the subject of her sorrow, thus breaks forth——

“ In these deep solitudes and awful cells,  
 “ Where heav’nly-pensive Contemplation  
     “ dwells,  
 “ And ever-musing Melancholy reigns,  
 “ What means this tumult in a Vestal’s veins ?  
 “ Why rove my thoughts beyond this last retreat ?  
     “ treat ?  
 “ Why feels my heart its long-forgotten  
     “ heat ?”

Then



Then hinting at the cause which revived these tumultuous ideas, that is, Abelard's letter, she determines not to pronounce that dear fatal name, nor yet to write it. But the manner in which she is involuntarily impelled, is beautifully and pathetically described in the following broken starts of passion.

“ O write it not, my hand—the name appears  
 “ Already written—wash it out, my tears !”

The picture she draws of the Convent is finely painted, and her own despondent condition in that dreary scene of confinement, is described in the most moving accents.

“ Relentless walls! whose darksome round  
 “ contains

“ Repentant sighs, and voluntary pains :

“ Ye rugged rocks, which holy knees have worn;

“ Ye grotts and caverns shagg'd with horrid  
 “ thorn !

“ Shrines ! where their vigils pale-ey'd vir-  
 “ gins keep,

“ And pitying saints, whose statues learn to  
 “ weep !

“ Tho' cold like you, unmov'd and silent  
 “ grown,

“ I have not yet forgot myself to stone \*.”

---

\* The learned reader will probably recollect that this beautiful thought is borrowed from Milton, in his *Il Penseroso*, where, in his invocation to Melancholy, he says—  
 “ Forget thyself to marble.”



The various emotions she feels on opening Abelard's Letters, and on meeting with her own, are feelingly expressed ; and the deplorable fate of those reluctant victims, who are destined to bid adieu to the world, before their hearts are weaned from the prospect of its pleasures, is strongly imaged in the following plaintive exclamation.

“ Now warm in love, now with’ring in my  
 “ bloom,  
 “ Lost in a convent’s solitary gloom !”

But such is the enthusiasm of her love, that notwithstanding all the painful sensations which the perusal of Abelard’s letters occasions her, she yet desires him to write.

“ Yet write, oh write me all ! that I may join  
 “ Griefs to thy griefs, and echo sighs to  
 “ thine.”

This naturally leads her to an admirable digression, in which she breaks forth in praise of the delightful advantages arising from epistolary correspondence ;---with a fond partiality, expressive of her character and situation, she extols the use of letters as they serve amorous purposes only, and supposes them to have been the gift of heaven.

“ Heav’n first taught Letters for some wretch’s  
 “ aid,  
 “ Some banish’d lover, or some captive maid ;  
 “ They



" They live, they speak, they breathe what  
   " Love inspires,  
 " Warm from the soul, and faithful to its  
   " fires,  
 " The virgin's wish without her fears impart,  
 " Excuse the blush, and pour out all the heart,  
 " Speed the soft intercourse from soul to soul,  
 " And waft a sigh from Indus to the Pole."

From these beautiful encomiums on the pleasures of epistolary intercourse, she makes a natural transition, and expatiates on the more keen and sensible delights of personal communication; which she paints with all the warm and rapturous glow of the most amorous imagination.

The first dawn of her passion is not only artfully introduced, but its progress traced from principles which could only influence one of nice sensations and delicate sentiments: she describes the early impressions which Abelard, her comely and graceful preceptor, made upon her mind, with an enthusiasm which is exquisitely affecting, poetical and sublime.

" Thou know'st how guiltless first I met thy  
   " flame,  
 " When Love approach'd me under friendship's  
   " name;  
 " My fancy form'd thee of angelic kind,  
 " Some emanation of th' all-beauteous Mind.  
 " Those smiling eyes, attempt'ring ev'ry ray,  
 " Shone sweetly lambent with celestial day.



“ Guiltless I gaz’d, heav’n listen’d while you  
 “ sung;  
 “ And truths divine came mended from that  
 “ tongue.”

She then gives a loose to the wantonness of  
 amorous fancy, and avows the unrestrained licence  
 of her love, in the most extravagant and  
 passionate description.

“ How oft, when press’d to marriage, have  
 “ I said,  
 “ Curse on all laws but those which Love  
 “ has made?  
 “ Love, free as air, at sight of human ties,  
 “ Spreads his light wings, and in a moment  
 “ flies.”

\* \* \* \* \*

“ Should at my feet the world’s great master  
 “ fall,  
 “ Himself, his throne, his world, I’d scorn  
 “ ’em all:  
 “ Not Cæsar’s empress would I deign to prove;  
 “ No, make me mistress to the man I love;  
 “ If there be yet another name more free,  
 “ More fond than mistress, make me that to  
 “ thee!  
 “ Oh! happy state! when souls each other  
 “ draw,  
 “ When love is liberty, and nature, law.”

She



She then indulges herself in the recollection that Abelard and she were once in this happy state, on which she expatiates with exquisite fondness and sensibility: but from these scenes of rapture, her mind is suddenly recalled, and turned to the horrid change which her lover's cruel fate has induced.

“ Alas ! how chang'd ! what sudden horrors  
“ rise !

“ A naked Lover bound and bleeding lies !

“ Where, where was Eloïse ? her voice, her  
“ hand !

“ Her ponyard had oppos'd the dire command.

“ Barbarian, stay ! that bloody stroke restrain ;

“ The crime was common, common be the  
“ pain.”

It is impossible to read these pathetic lines, without admiring the oblique and delicate allusions with which she glances at the nature of her lover's deplorable disaster. The lively emotions, the sudden starts of passion, the broken hints which rage dictates, and shame suppresses, all conspire to awaken the reader's sympathy, and to place the horror of the scene alluded to, in the most affecting point of view.

From this scene of woe, her recollection is led to another scarce less dismal: And, in the most moving strain of lamentation, she reminds Abelard of the sacrifice they made at the foot of the  
the



the altar; and of the dreadful omens which attended the celebration of those awful rites.

“ Canst thou forget that sad, that solemn day,  
“ When victims at yon altar’s foot we lay?  
“ Canst thou forget what tears that moment  
“ fell,  
“ When, warm in youth, I bade the world  
“ farewell?  
“ As with *cold* lips I kiss’d the sacred veil,  
“ The shrines all *trembled*, and the lamps *grew*  
“ *pale*.”

In the two last lines particularly, there is scarce a single epithet which is not happily appropriated, and has not a peculiar beauty and force. Her kissing the veil with *cold* lips, strongly marks her want of that fervent zeal and devotion, which should influence those votaries, who renounce the world. The presages likewise which attended the rites, are finely imagined. The trembling of the shrine, the pallid hue of the lamps, as if they were conscious of the reluctant sacrifice the votaries were making, are instances of a strong poetical fancy, judiciously displayed in the choice of the most apposite and striking imagery.

These circumstances likewise are premised with great address and singular propriety, to introduce the confession she afterwards makes, that in the midst of this solemn scene, her fondness for Abelard prevailed over every other idea.

“ Yet



“ Yet then, to those dread altars as I drew,  
 “ Not on the *Cross* my eyes were fix’d, but  
 “ *you.*”

Her passion then swelling in a full tide of  
 amorous transport, breaks forth in the following  
 rapturous invocations.

“ Come! with thy looks, thy words, relieve  
 “ my woe;  
 “ Those *still at least* are left thee to bestow;  
 “ Still on that breast enamour’d let me lie,  
 “ Still drink delicious poison from thy eye,  
 “ Pant on thy lip, and to thy heart be press’d;  
 “ Give all thou canst---and let me dream the  
 “ rest.”

Perhaps the excess of amorous fondness never  
 was expressed with a greater degree of sensibi-  
 lity and delicacy. With what passionate regret  
 and despair, yet with what becoming modesty,  
 she repeatedly hints at her lover’s irreparable  
 misfortune.

Having exhausted every source of fond sen-  
 timent in this violent gust of amorous passion,  
 she is naturally recalled to a sense of her present  
 condition, and, by a beautiful transition, sud-  
 denly checks the extravagance of her raptures.

“ Ah no! instruct me other joys to prize,  
 “ With other beauties charm my partial eyes,  
 “ Full in my view set all the bright abode,  
 “ And make my soul quit Abelard for God.”

This



This devout cast of mind, turns her thoughts towards monastic objects: and recollecting that her Abelard was the founder of the monastery, she intreats him at least to visit his flock. This circumstance of his being the founder of the monastery, affords room for some very just and pathetic reflections, in which such donations as are extorted by priestly artifice, and benefactions bequeathed through fear, to avert the justice of offended heaven, are keenly satirized in the following beautiful lines, of which the second presents the most lively and poetical imagery.

“ No weeping orphan saw his father’s stores  
 “ *Our shrines irradiate, or emblaze the floors;*  
 “ No silver saints, by dying misers giv’n,  
 “ Here brib’d the rage of ill requited heav’n:  
 “ But such plain roofs as piety could raise,  
 “ And only vocal with the Maker’s praise.”

There is great address in thus artfully introducing moral sentiments in the midst of pure description, which seize the mind as it were by surprise, and make a more forcible impression, than a professed and direct application.

But the power of description was, perhaps, never carried higher than in the lines which immediately follow, wherein the gloom of the convent is thrown into such awful shades, that every appropriated epithet impresses the mind with a solemn, yet not unpleasing sadness.

“ In



“ In these *lone* walls (their days eternal bound)  
 “ The *moss-grown* domes with *spiry* turrets  
     “ crown’d,  
 “ Where *awful* arches make a noon-day night,  
 “ And the *dim* windows shed a *solemn* light,  
 “ Thy eyes diffus’d a reconciling ray.”

She then laments in the most plaintive strains, that his presence being wanting to brighten this gloomy scene, every object wears a mournful aspect, and that she is wholly unsusceptible of the few pensive pleasures, which are calculated to soothe the mind of a recluse.

“ The *darksome* pines that o’er yon rocks re-  
     “ clin’d  
 “ Wave high, and murmur to the *hollow* wind,  
 “ The wand’ring streams that shine between  
     “ the hills,  
 “ The grotts that echo to the tinkling rills,  
 “ The *dying* gales that *pant* upon the trees,  
 “ The lakes that *quiver* to the curling breeze;  
 “ No more these scenes my meditation aid,  
 “ Or lull to rest the visionary maid.”

Nothing can be more delightfully picturesque than this description : there is no reading it without being, in some degree, disposed to relish these solitary and contemplative enjoyments.

But this solemn scene of pensive pleasing meditation, is suddenly contrasted by a most beautiful and striking personification of MELANCHOLY, whose baneful influence and effect is



so affectingly described, that a reader of any sensibility feels a gloom gradually diffuse itself over his mind.

“ But o’er the twilight groves and dusky caves,  
 “ Long-sounding isles, and intermingled graves,  
 “ Black MELANCHOLY sits, and round her

“ *throws*

“ A death-like silence, and a dread repose :  
 “ Her gloomy presence saddens all the scene,  
 “ Shades ev’ry flow’r, and darkens ev’ry  
 “ green,

“ Deepens the murmur of the falling floods,  
 “ And *breathes* a *browner* horror on the  
 “ woods.”

It is candidly and justly observed by the essayist so often mentioned, that the figurative expressions, *throws*, *breathes*, and *browner* horror, are some of the strongest and boldest in the English language.

The image of the goddess MELANCHOLY, who sits brooding over the convent, and throwing a contagious horror on every object around her, is boldly conceived and expressed with great poetical enthusiasm and sublimity.

At the same time impartiality obliges me to observe that even in this description, excellent as it is, there seems to be a faulty anti-climax. For, after having represented MELANCHOLY, as throwing round her---



“ A death-like silence, and a dread repose,”

It is surely lowering the idea greatly, to add, in the very next line, that---

“ Her gloomy presence saddens all the scene.”

Having painted this scene of horror, Eloisa very naturally laments that she is doomed to stay there for ever, and that death alone can release her: nay, that even after death, her remains must abide there.

“ And here, ev’n then, shall my cold dust  
remain,

“ Here all its frailties, all its flames resign,  
“ *And wait till ’tis no sin to mix with thine.*”

I have often wondered how this last line could steal into this excellent poem, which is so remarkable for harmonious versification. Though there is a pathos and delicacy of *sentiment* conveyed in this line, yet there is nothing like poetry in it. It is, in truth, absolutely flat and prosaic: but it is, perhaps, the only bad verse in the whole poem.

The idea of mingling her ashes with Abelard, raises a tumult of conflicting passions, which divide and distract her soul: One while she breathes all the devotion of a vestal; then again she gives a loose to all the fondness of a woman.

“ Ah



- “ Ah wretch ! believ’d the spouse of God in  
     “ vain,  
 “ Confess’d within the slave of love and man.  
 “ Assist me, heav’n ! but whence arose that  
     “ pray’r ?  
 “ Sprung it from piety, or from despair ? ”

There is great beauty in this self-interrogation, respecting the opposite motives of her prayer, which are very nicely distinguished : and she continues to recount the various emotions by which she is alternately agitated——

- “ I ought to grieve, but cannot what I ought ;  
 “ I mourn the lover, not lament the fault ;

\* \* \* \* \*

- “ Now turn’d to heav’n, I weep my past offence,  
 “ Now think of thee, and curse my inno-  
     “ cence.”

Conscious of the difficulty of composing such various perturbations, she thus exclaims——

- “ Ere such a soul regains its peaceful state,  
 “ How often must it love, how often hate !  
 “ How often hope, despair, resent, regret,  
 “ Conceal, disdain,--do all things but forget.”

Then in a bold and sublime strain, she breaks forth into a kind of sacred rapture.

- “ But let heav’n seize it, all at once ’tis fir’d ;  
 “ Not touch’d, but rapt ; not waken’d, but  
     “ inspir’d ! ”

In



In this fit of enthusiasm, she calls on Abelard to aid her devotion.

- “ Oh come ! oh teach me nature to subdue,  
 “ Renounce my love, my life, myself---and  
 “ you.  
 “ Fill my fond heart with God alone, for he  
 “ Alone can rival, can succeed to thee.”

This glowing spirit of devout zeal, likewise reminds her of the different lot of the blameless vestal, whose spotless mind is not agitated by the passionate perturbations of guilt. She describes the equanimity, the composure, the pure and tranquil delights which such an one enjoys, in a strain which is poetical, even to enchantment.

- “ Grace shines around her with sereneest beams,  
 “ And whisp’ring Angels prompt her golden  
 “ dreams.  
 “ For her th’ unfading rose of Eden blooms,  
 “ And wings of Seraphs shed divine per-  
 “ fumes,  
 “ For her the Spouse prepares the bridal ring,  
 “ For her white virgins Hymenæals sing,  
 “ To sounds of heav’nly harps she dies away,  
 “ And melts in visions of eternal day.”

This pure seraphic bliss, which none but an immaculate vestal can taste, is finely contrasted by the following sudden transition, which describes her own criminal and perturbate state.



- " Far other dreams my erring soul employ,  
 " Far other raptures of unholy joy :  
 " When at the close of each sad, sorrowing day,  
 " Fancy restores what *Vengeance* snatch'd away.  
 " Then conscience sleeps, and leaving nature  
     " free,  
 " All my loose soul unbounded springs to thee."

Here again she obliquely and modestly hints at her lover's misfortune, which seems, as it were, to encrease the eagerness of her passion, which is still more forcibly expressed in the following lines.

- " Oh curst, dear horrors of all-conscious night !  
 " How glowing guilt exalts the keen delight !  
 " Provoking Dæmons all restraint remove,  
 " And stir within me ev'ry source of love."

Then, as if spent with the rage of agonizing passion, she calmly reflects on the different situation of her lover, and, with peculiar delicacy, again distantly alludes to the misfortune, which created the difference she describes.

- " For thee the Fates, severely kind, ordain  
 " A cool suspense from pleasure and from  
     " pain ;  
 " Thy life a long dead calm of fix'd repose ;  
 " No pulse that riots, and no blood that glows."

The following similes, by which this still state of dispassionate repose is illustrated, are highly beautiful and poetical.

" Still



“ Still as the sea, ere winds were taught to blow,  
 “ Or moving spirit bade the waters flow;  
 “ Soft as the slumbers of a faint forgiv’n,  
 “ And mild as op’ning gleams of promis’d  
 “ heav’n.”

These admirable lines breathe such a reconciling spirit of composure, attempered with mild devotion, as gradually prepare her to sink into a corresponding habit of mind. Her emotions appear less violent. She calmly calls upon her Abelard, and once more chastely glancing at his lamentable fate, she upbraids herself for indulging the idea of a fruitless unavailing fondness, in the following beautiful breaks of declining passion.

“ Come, Abelard ! for what hast thou to dread ?  
 “ The torch of Venus burns not for the dead.  
 “ Nature stands check’d ; Religion disapproves ;  
 “ Ev’n thou art cold——yet Eloïsa loves.”

Still, however, she complains tenderly, though not so passionately, that her lover’s image steals between her and her devotion : and particularly that she fondly recollects the enchantment of his *voice*, which, it seems, was one of Abelard’s peculiar excellencies.

“ Thy Voice I seem in ev’ry hymn to hear,  
 “ With ev’ry bead I drop too soft a tear.”

Then follows a noble and sublime description of some of the circumstances attending the celebration of high mass.

M 2

“ When



" When from the censer clouds of fragrance  
     " roll,  
 " And swelling organs lift the rising soul,  
 " One thought of thee puts all the pomp to  
     " flight,  
 " Priests, tapers, temples, swim before my  
     " sight :  
 " In seas of flame my plunging soul is drown'd,  
 " While Altars blaze, and Angels tremble  
     " round \*."

She then disposes herself to pious resignation,  
 and by a fond *menace*, *indirectly* warns her lover,  
 no longer to intervene between her and the  
 dawning grace which is just opening on her  
 soul.

" While prostrate here in humble grief I lie,  
 " Kind, virtuous drops just gath'ring in my eye,  
 " While praying, trembling, in the dust I roll,  
 " And dawning grace is op'ning on my soul :  
 " *Come, if thou dar'st*, all charming as thou art !  
 " Oppose thyself to heav'n ; dispute my heart ;

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\* It is well observed by the essayist, that few persons have  
 ever been present at the celebrating a mass in a good choir,  
 without being extremely affected with awe, if not with de-  
 votion ; which ought to put us on our guard, against the  
 insinuating nature of so pompous and alluring a religion as  
 popery. He likewise mentions an anecdote concerning Lord  
 Bolingbroke, which deserves to be repeated. His Lordship  
 being one day present at this solemnity at the chapel of Ver-  
 sailles, and seeing the archbishop of Paris elevate the host,  
 whispered his companion, the Marquis de \*\*\*\* " If I  
 " were king of France, I would always perform this cere-  
 " mony myself."



" Come, with one glance of those deluding  
 " eyes  
 " Blot out each bright Idea of the skies ;  
 " Take back that grace, those sorrows, and  
 " those tears ;  
 " Take back my fruitless penitence and pray'rs ;  
 " Snatch me, just mounting, from the blest  
 " abode ;  
 " Assist the fiends, and tear me from my  
 " God \* ! "

In the next lines she *directly* commands him to fly from her, and bids adieu to his memory.

" No, fly me, fly me, far as Pole from Pole ;  
 " Rise Alps between us ! and whole oceans  
 " roll !  
 " Ah ! come not, write not, think not once of  
 " me,  
 " Nor share one pang of all I felt for thee !

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\* I cannot help thinking that the essayist has totally mistaken the poet's meaning in the foregoing lines, from whence he supposes that Eloisa acknowledges the weakness of her religious efforts, and gives herself up to the prevalence of her passions. Far otherwise—It is scarce to be presumed, that in this *declining* stage of her passion, she should so desperately abandon herself as seriously to call on Abelard to assist the Fiends, and tear her from her God. On the contrary, she describes grace dawning on her soul, and defies her lover, charming as he is, to interrupt the progress of her rising devotion : The whole passage is penned in a stile of indirect menace, not of absolute despair. *Come if thou dar'st*, signifies, come, if thou be'st so abandoned ;—and the insinuation of the whole is, that if Abelard should be so wicked to assist the Fiends, she was lost, notwithstanding this temporary conquest.



“Thy oaths I quit, thy memory resign;  
 “Forget, renounce me, hate whate’er was  
 “mine,”

She then welcomes grace and virtue, in a strain of devout enthusiasm, which is beautifully poetical.

“Oh Grace serene! oh virtue heav’nly fair!  
 “Divine oblivion of low-thoughted care!  
 “Fresh blooming hope, gay daughter of the  
 “sky!  
 “And Faith, our early immortality!  
 “Enter, each mild, each amicable guest;  
 “Receive, and wrap me, in eternal rest!”

The poet shews great skill and address in thus making the violence of her passion subside, and give way by degrees to the ascendancy of religious zeal. Having brought her to such a temper of resignation, that she is prepared for eternity, an awful circumstance is next introduced, more firmly to reconcile her to her destiny. She describes herself as stretched on a tomb, and fancies that she hears a spirit call to her in each low wind. The imagery of this solemn scene is strongly conceived, and poetically expressed.

“Here, as I watch’d the dying lamps around,  
 “From yonder shrine I heard a solemn sound.  
 “Come, Sister, come! (it said, or seem’d to  
 “say)  
 “Thy place is here, sad Sister, come away!  
 “Once



“ Once like thyself, I trembled, wept, and  
 “ pray’d;  
 “ Love’s victim then, tho’ now a fainted maid:  
 “ But all is calm in this eternal sleep;  
 “ Here grief forgets to groan, and love to  
 “ weep,  
 “ Ev’n *Superstition* loses every fear:  
 “ For God, not man, absolves our frailties  
 “ here\*.”

This is beyond all encomium in a poem where every line obliges us to pay our warmest tribute of applause.

At the fancied call of this aerial sympathetic sister, Eloisa starts in a kind of religious rapture, and seems eagerly to hasten towards this scene of pure and everlasting bliss, which is so poetically pictured.

“ I come, I come! prepare your roseate bow’rs,  
 “ Celestial palms, and ever-blooming flow’rs.  
 “ Thither, where *sinners* may have rest, I go,  
 “ Where *flames* *refin’d* in breasts seraphic  
 “ glow.”

She then calls on Abelard, to perform the last offices, and smooth her passage to these bright abodes. There is something inexpressibly mov-

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\* The two last lines afford a striking instance, that a man of strong sense and sound judgment, cannot be a bigot in *any religion*: not even in *that* which has bigotry for its principle.



ing in the last marks of her expiring fondness——

“ See my lips tremble, and my eye-balls roll,  
 “ *Suck* my last breath, and *catch* my flying soul!”

But suddenly recollecting herself, she wishes him to attend her in a character less passionate, and rather to perform the duties of his holy function, in her dying moments.

“ Ah no---in sacred vestments may’st thou  
 “ stand,  
 “ The hallow’d taper trembling in thy hand,  
 “ Present the Cross before my *lifted* eye,  
 “ Teach me at once, and learn of me to die.”

Then in a sudden and most pathetick transition, she calls on Abelard to take the last parting look of her, even in the agonies of death.

“ Ah then, thy once-lov’d Eloïsa see!  
 “ It will be then *no crime* to gaze on me.  
 “ See from my cheek the transient roses fly!  
 “ See the *last sparkle languish* in my eye!”

I will venture to say that a man who can read these lines with unshaken nerves, has not a grain of sensibility in his composition.

She does not yet, however, relinquish the idea of Abelard; her fondness for him extends itself beyond the grave, and is expressed in the most affecting and poetical strain.

“ In



“ In trance extatic may thy pangs be drown’d,  
 “ Bright clouds descend, and Angels watch thee  
     “ round,  
 “ From op’ning skies may streaming glories  
     “ shine,  
 “ And Saints embrace thee with a love like  
     “ mine.”

She lastly wishes \* that they may be buried in one grave; and presuming that two wandering lovers may, ages hence, chance to gaze on their tomb in the Paraclete; she supposes, that, touched with mutual pity, they may make the following tender exclamation:

“ Oh may we never love as these have lov’d !”

To carry the circumstance of commiseration still higher, she imagines, that even a casual glance at their tomb, will affect the beholders with such involuntary pity, as even to check their fervour in the act of devotion.

“ From the full choir when loud Hosannas  
     “ rise,  
 “ And swell the pomp of dreadful sacrifice,  
 “ Amid that scene if some relenting eye  
 “ Glance on the stone where our cold relicks  
     “ lie,

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\* This wish was fulfilled. The body of Abelard, who died twenty years before Eloisa, was sent to her, and interred in the Monastery of the Paraclete,



“ Devotion’s self shall steal a thought from  
 “ heav’n,  
 “ One human tear shall drop, and be for-  
 “ giv’n\*.”

Nothing can be more finely imagined than these lines, nor more expressive of the tender sympathy which must be excited in every feeling breast on recollecting the deplorable fate of this unhappy pair †.

Upon the whole, it is not, perhaps, too much to say, that it is not in the power of language to describe the various tumults of conflicting passions with greater energy and pathos; the opposite sentiments, which agitate the soul of Eloisa, are marked by such natural and masterly transitions, that the mind of the reader is irresistibly attracted, and sympathizes with her in every alternate change of passion. It may be truly said,

“ ———— *Pectus inaniter angit,*  
 “ *Irritat, mulcet, falsis terroribus implet,*  
 “ *Ut magus*—————

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\* Here again the essayist seems to have misunderstood the poet’s meaning. For he apprehends the lines above quoted to be descriptive of the behaviour of the two lovers; whereas they seem to point out the more striking effect, which the accidental view of their tomb would have even on the congregation, during the time of divine service.

† I agree, however, with the essayist, that with these eight lines the poem should have ended; for the eight additional verses are comparatively languid and flat, and diminish the pathos of the foregoing sentiments.

The



The poet, in this epistle, displays an accurate knowledge of human nature. He appears to have been thoroughly acquainted with the secret workings of the heart, and the force and influence of the various emotions which contending passions produce \*.

Nevertheless, with all it's poetical merit, it is much to be feared that it has done no service to the cause of virtue ; which it certainly never was the worthy poet's intention to injure. Though, taken all together, the piece conveys a most excellent moral, by shewing the lamentable distress which attends the indulgence of sensual appetite, and that religion alone has power to assuage and compose the perturbation it creates ; yet, at the same time it is to be apprehended, that the exquisite painting and animating descriptions of licentious passion, which abound in detached parts of this epistle, have too frequently made fatal impressions on persons of warm temperament, and of light reflection. The glowing lines which express the extrava-

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\* Our poet, with all his genius, had never yet been able to give that supreme perfection to the strains of this poem, had he not been early conversant amongst the books in his mother's closet, with those tracts of mystical devotion which so much charm the female mind when religion turns its strongest passion upon *love celestial*. And there being but one way of expressing rapturous emotions, whether the object be earthly or heavenly, the imagination, which only is employed in these meditations, soars on the wings of poetry. So that our young poet could not but be much taken with this kind of reading : And, in fact, the best of the mystic writers had a place in his library amongst the bards.



gance of Eloisa's fondness, her contempt of conjugal ties, and the unbounded freedom of her attachment, have been often repeated with too much success by artful libertines to forward the purposes of seduction, and have as often, perhaps, been remembered by the deluded fair, and deemed a sanction for illicit deviations from the paths of virtue.

Soon after this celebrated epistle, Mr. POPE wrote his *Temple of Fame*, which, agreeably to his usual practice, he kept in his study for two years before it was published.

Nor did he then venture to make it public, till it had received the approbation of two critical judges, Mr. Steele and Mr. Addison, being, as he says himself, afraid of nothing so much as to impose any thing on the world unworthy of its acceptance. Having sent a copy of it to the former, he received the following answer :

“ I have read your *Temple of Fame* twice,  
 “ and cannot find any thing amiss, of weight  
 “ enough to call a fault, but see in it a thousand  
 “ thousand beauties. Mr. Addison shall see it  
 “ to morrow ; after his perusal of it, I will let  
 “ you know his thoughts.”

After it was published, he presented it to a lady ; accompanied with a letter which, if we may judge from the conclusion, appears to have been penned in a very jocular mood,

“ Now



“ Now I talk of Fame, I send you my *Temple*  
 “ of *Fame*, which is just come out : but my sen-  
 “ timents about it you will see better by this  
 “ epigram.

“ What’s Fame with men, by custom of the  
 “ nation  
 “ Is call’d in women only reputation,  
 “ About them both, why keep we such a  
 “ pother?  
 “ Part you with one, and I’ll renounce the  
 “ other.”

This piece is taken from Chaucer’s *House of Fame*. The design, however, is in a manner entirely altered, the descriptions and most of the particular thoughts being Mr. POPE’s; yet he was too candid to suffer it to be printed without making due acknowledgment. The reader who would compare it with Chaucer, must begin with his third book of *Fame*, there being nothing in the two first books that answers to their title. Though this poem is by no means the most interesting of Mr. POPE’s works, nor of the most harmonious versification, yet there are several passages in it highly beautiful, both with respect to sentiment and poetry.

His description of the centre of the *Temple* is finely imagined. Six pompous columns are represented aspiring above the rest around the shrine of *Fame*, on which are placed the greatest names in learning of all antiquity. These are described in attitudes expressive of their differ-  
 rent



rent characters, and the columns on which they are raised, are adorned with sculptures, taken from the most striking subjects of their works ; which sculpture, in its manner and character, bears a resemblance to the manner and character of their writings.

Among these literary chiefs, Homer stands eminently distinguished, and it is observable that our Poet never speaks of him but with a kind of grateful enthusiasm.

“ High on the first, the mighty Homer shone ;

“ Eternal adamant compos’d his throne ;

“ Father of verse ! in holy fillets drest,

“ His silver beard wav’d gently o’er his breast ;

“ Tho’ blind, a boldness in his look appears ;

“ In years he seem’d, but not impair’d by  
“ years.

“ The wars of Troy were round the Pillar  
“ seen :

“ Here fierce Tydides wounds the Cyprian  
“ Queen ;

“ Here Hector glorious from Patroclus’ fall,

“ Here dragg’d in triumph round the Trojan  
“ wall :

“ Motion and life did ev’ry part inspire,

“ Bold was the work, and prov’d the master’s  
“ fire ;

“ A strong expression most he seem’d t’affect,

“ And here and there disclos’d a brave neglect.”

The nice strokes likewise, by which he marks the column appropriated to Virgil, are very beautiful and characteristic.

“ Finish’d



" Finish'd the whole, and labour'd ev'ry part,  
 " With patient touches of unweary'd art :  
 " The *Mantuan* there in sober triumph fate,  
 " Compos'd his posture, and his looks sedate ;  
 " On Homer still he fix'd a rev'rend eye,  
 " Great without pride, in modest majesty."

Pindar, Horace, Aristotle and Tully are likewise finely characterized. But the beauty of description is the least merit of this little piece ; it contains a great deal of good sense and poignant satire : Particularly in that part where the several suppliants prefer their petitions to the goddess. Having first introduced the learned, then the good and just, &c. the warlike scourges of mankind next advance, and are treated with a just contempt.

" A troop came next, who crowns and armour  
   " wore,  
 " And proud defiance in their looks they bore :  
 " For thee (they cry'd) amidst alarms and  
   " strife,  
 " We sail'd in tempests down the stream of  
   " life ;  
 " For thee whole nations fill'd with flames and  
   " blood,  
 " And swam to empire thro' the purple flood.  
 " Those ills we dar'd, thy inspiration own,  
 " What virtue seem'd, was done for thee  
   " alone. . . .  
   " Ambitious fools ! (the Queen reply'd,  
   " and frown'd)  
 " Be all your acts in dark oblivion drown'd ;  
                                   " There



" There sleep forgot, with mighty tyrants gone,  
 " Your statues moulder'd, and your names  
     " unknown !  
 " A sudden cloud straight snatch'd them from  
     " my sight,  
 " And each majestic phantom sunk in night."

By way of contrast to these, the plain men of modest worth succeed, and their merit is placed in so amiable a light, that it is impossible not to be in love with their character.

" Then came the finallest tribe I yet had seen ;  
 " Plain was their dress, and modest was their  
     " mien.  
 " Great idol of mankind ! we neither claim  
 " The praise of merit, nor aspire to Fame !  
 " But safe in deserts from th' applause of men,  
 " Would die unheard of, as we liv'd unseen,  
 " 'Tis all we beg thee, to conceal from sight  
 " Those acts of goodness, which themselves  
     " requite.  
 " O let us still the secret joy partake,  
 " To follow virtue ev'n for virtue's sake."

The answer of the goddess conveys an excellent moral.

" And live there men, who slight immortal  
     " fame ?  
 " Who then with incense shall adore our name ?  
 " But mortals ! know, 'tis still our greatest pride  
 " To blaze those virtues, which the good  
     " would hide.

" Rise !



" Rise! Muses, rise! add all your tuneful  
 " breath,  
 " These must not sleep in darkness and in death.  
 " She said: in air the trembling music floats,  
 " And on the winds triumphant swell the notes;  
 " So soft, tho' high, so loud, and yet so clear,  
 " Ev'n list'ning Angels lean'd from heav'n to  
 " hear."

It is hard to say which is most to be admired, the good sense, or pleasing harmony of these lines. Of which the last in particular is highly poetical, and presents the most striking and agreeable image.

The last of the train of suppliants are stigmatized with that just and noble indignation, which every honest and generous mind bears against the professors of *Machiavelian* policy.

" Last, those who boast of mighty mischiefs  
 " done,  
 " Enslave their country, or usurp a throne;  
 " Or who their glory's dire foundation laid  
 " On sovereigns ruin'd, or on friends betray'd;  
 " Calm, thinking villains, whom no faith  
 " could fix,  
 " Of crooked counsels and dark politics."

From the Temple of Fame, the scene changes to that of rumour, of which the description is beautifully picturesque. The effects arising from the various sounds are illustrated by a simile so happily imagined, and expressed in such melodious



dious versification, that no reader of taste will be tired with the length of it.

“ As on the smooth expanse of crystal lakes \*  
 “ The sinking stone at first a circle makes ;  
 “ The trembling surface by the motion  
     “ stirr’d,  
 “ Spreads in a second circle, then a third ;  
 “ Wide, and more wide, the floating rings  
     “ advance,  
 “ Fill all the wat’ry plain, and to the margin  
     “ dance :  
 “ Thus ev’ry voice and sound, when first  
     “ they break,  
 “ On neigh’ring air a soft impression make ;  
 “ Another ambient circle then they move ;  
 “ That, in its turn, impells the next above ;  
 “ Thro’ undulating air the sounds are sent,  
 “ And spread o’er all the fluid element.”

With respect to the other translations, and imitations, which follow in this volume, such as *January and May*, *The Wife of Bath*, &c. they are too inconsiderable for a critical analysis. These ludicrous pieces however, serve to shew the universality of Mr. POPE’s genius, being penned with all the ease, gaiety, and vivacity suitable to the levity of the subjects, and the years of the author. Most of the *translations* were but a sort of *exercises*, while he was improving himself in the languages, and carried

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\* The reader will recollect the same simile in Addison’s *Cato*.



by his early bent to poetry, to perform them rather in verse than prose.

Of these the most observable is the translation of the first book of the *Thebais* of Statius, which was done when the author was but fourteen, and affords nothing very striking. Indeed the subject seems to have been ill chosen: it is one of those which become more disagreeable, the better they are executed: being calculated rather to inspire horror, than pity; and whatever excites horror, should be banished from poetry. There is no reading the execration of Oedipus against his children, nor many other parts of this piece, without shuddering with horror. Indeed Statius, as POPE observes, though one of the best versifiers, next to Virgil, was none of the discretest poets, and our author has pointed out several gross faults in composition, which, even at this early age, did not escape the correctness of his judgment.

The *Imitations* likewise, were some of them done so early as at the age of fourteen or fifteen, but having got into miscellanies, they were added to complete this juvenile volume.

Nevertheless, some of these looser compositions it is to be feared have more admirers than his graver pieces, being adapted to entertain the herd of readers, whose ideas seldom extend *ultra Cingulum*.

Our author, before the publication of his *Temple of Fame*, had made a considerable progress



gress in his translation of Homer's Iliad, as may be collected from a passage in the letter above taken notice of to the Lady whom he presented with his Temple of Fame.

He had once formed a design of giving a taste of all the celebrated Greek poets, by translating one of the best short pieces from each of them, which he would have executed, had he not engaged in this translation; and he has often ingenuously confessed that he undertook this work, which was so much more laborious, solely with a view to profit, being then so destitute of money, that he had not sufficient to purchase the books he had occasion for. Lord Oxford it seems always discouraged this undertaking, and used to compliment our author, by saying that so good a writer ought not to be a translator.

In 1713, he circulated proposals for publishing this translation by subscription. He had been long importuned to engage in this undertaking, by several of his friends, particularly Sir William Trumbull \*, and he no sooner re-

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\* Lord Lansdown likewise encouraged our author to pursue his design, as appears from one of his letters, dated 21st October 1713.

“ I am pleased beyond measure with your design of translating Homer. The trials which you have already made and published on some parts of that author, have shewn that you are equal to so great a task; and you may therefore depend upon the utmost services I can do in promoting this work, or any thing that may be for your service.”

solved



solved on the attempt, which he began about the age of twenty-five, than he prosecuted it with great ardour and assiduity.

He was so anxious during the time he was employed about it, that it not only occupied his thoughts by day, but was so much the subject of his dreams by night, that he often imagined himself travelling a long journey, and that he should never arrive at the end of the road.

His solicitude to preserve the reputation he had acquired, made him attentive to every circumstance which might render his translation more perfect. With this view, he voluntarily enlarged his design, by adding to it many curious and valuable notes \*: and being under a necessity of consulting a great number of authors, a little before the death of Queen Anne, he made a journey to Oxford, where he had recourse to the books in the Bodleian, and other libraries in that university.

He was not more than five years in translating the Iliad, of which the greater part was written with vast rapidity, and no inconsiderable portion of it composed as he passed along the road: for a genius very often is least idle, when he seems most so †.

In

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\* The notes on the Iliad were written by Mr. POPE; those on the Odyssey by Dr. Broome.

† The first manuscript copy is yet in being, and is designed for some public library, as of singular curiosity, being



In this translation, and in that of the *Odyſſey* which he executed afterwards, he uſed in general to take advantage of the firſt glow: afterwards calmly to correct each book by the original; then to compare it with other tranſlations; and laſtly to give it a reading for the ſake of the verſification only ‡.

By the tranſlation of the *Iliad*, which was published for his own benefit, he acquired a conſiderable fortune, the ſubſcription being ſo large that it amounted, as it is ſaid, to no leſs than 6000 *l.* and our author afterwards ſold it to Lintot \* for 1200 *l.* in money, beſides all the books

ing written in the envelopes of letters; which occaſioned Swift's calling him—*Paper-ſparing Pope*.

‡ The foul copy of the *Iliad* was full of corrections, and our author was of opinion that thoſe parts read beſt, which had been moſt blotted: The foul copy of the *Odyſſey* was not ſo full of obliterations, which ſhews that he had by that time attained greater readineſs and correctneſs.

\* The project for the tranſlation of Homer's *Iliad* being become a matter of great expectation, the bookſellers all put in for the prize: but, as the poet ſays, on another occaſion, though with an eye to this, for he loved to turn what was ridiculous in his own adventures into ridicule,

The lofty Lintot in the circle roſe,  
“ This prize is mine; who tempt it are my foes.”

Lintot had then no foundation for his *loftineſs*: and on that account, perhaps, was tempted to bid moſt. The terms he offered Mr. POPE were ſo advantageous, that all the heſitation he had to accepting them, was from the apprehenſion he



books for his subscribers, as well as those he intended for presents †.

Never was a more general encouragement given to any literary undertaking, nor was any translation ever executed with more art, or that abounded with so much poetic fire ‡. Men of all

he had that the affair would ruin the bookseller : and therefore, as he told an intimate friend, he honestly, and prudently too, endeavoured to dissuade Lintot from thinking any more of the matter. But the lefty Lintot was not to be so intimidated. He made the bargain and his fortune together. The success of the work was so great, that the bookseller was enriched at once : he purchased considerably, and was made high sheriff of the county where his estates lay.

† It may be proper to observe, that all the materials for the Life of Homer, which was penned by Dean Parnelle, were collected and classed by Mr. POPE. The composition is stiff, and was much more so, the correction having cost Mr. POPE more trouble than if he had wrote it originally.

‡ In the last edition he himself gave of the translated Iliad, the present Bishop of Gloucester, at his desire, revised and corrected the Preface, and the Essay on Homer, as they now stand. This desire is intimated in the following letter, wherein Mr. POPE, after expressing the warmest wishes to serve his learned and valuable friend, continues thus—

“ But I live in a time when benefits are not in the power  
 “ of an honest man to bestow ; nor indeed of an honest man  
 “ to receive, considering on what terms they are generally  
 “ to be had. It is certain you have a full right to any I could  
 “ do you, who not only monthly, but weekly, of late, have  
 “ loaded me with favours of that kind, which are most  
 “ acceptable to veteran authors ; those garlands which a  
 “ commentator weaves to hang about his poet, and which  
 N 4 “ are



all ranks and parties united in their zeal to promote it, though at the same time it must not be concealed that some secret and invidious attempts were made to detract from our author's merit in the public opinion.

It must give pain to every reader who is a friend to literature, to be told that Mr. Addison on this occasion was capable of so much mean jealousy, as to descend to the basest arts of rivalry, in order to suppress the rising fame of our author, with whom he associated on terms of friendship and respect; and who had long treated him with uncommon regard.

Our author's friendship with Mr. Addison commenced in 1713. Mr. POPE used to say that he liked him *de bon coeur*, as well as he liked any man, and was very fond of his conversation. In short, their friendship was cultivated on both sides with all the marks of mutual esteem and affection, and with a constant intercourse of good offices. Thus, when the translation of

“are flowers both of his own gathering and planting too;  
“not blossoms springing from the dry author.

“It is very unreasonable after this, to give you a second  
“trouble in revising the *Essay on Homer*. But I look upon  
“you as one sworn to suffer no errors in me: and though  
“the common way with a commentator be to erect them  
“into beauties, the best office of a critic is to correct and  
“amend them. There being a new edition coming out of  
“Homer, I would willingly render it a little less defective,  
“and the bookseller will not allow me time to do so  
“myself.”



the Iliad was on foot, which was begun in 1713, Mr. Addison expressed the highest \* expectations from it, and when first published not only recommended it to the public †, but joined with the *Tories* in promoting the subscription, though, at the same time, as has been intimated, he advised Mr. POPE not to be content with the applause of one *half of the nation*. On the other hand, Mr. POPE made his friend's interest his own, and when Dennis so brutally attacked the tragedy of Cato, he wrote the piece intitled, "*A narrative of his madness.*"

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\* The expectation he formed will best appear from his own words, in his letter to Mr. POPE; speaking of this translation, he says——

"The work you mention will, I dare say, very sufficiently recommend itself when your name appears with the proposals: and if you think I can any way contribute to the forwarding of them, you cannot lay a greater obligation on me than by employing me in such an office. As I have an ambition of having it known that you are my friend, I shall be very proud of shewing it by this or any other instance. I question not but your translation will enrich our tongue, and do honour to our country."

† In the *Freeholder*, he recommends the translation in the following warm terms:

"When I consider myself as a *British Freeholder*, I am in a particular manner pleased with the labours of those who have improved our language with the translation of old Greek and Latin authors. The illiterate among our countrymen may learn to judge from *Dryden's Virgil* of the most perfect epic; and those parts of *Homer*, which have been already published by Mr. Pope, give us reason to think that the Iliad will appear in English, with as little disadvantage to that immortal poem."

Mr.



Mr. POPE likewise, from time to time, communicated to Mr. Addison the progress he made in his translation, and the difficulties which attended it, particularly in a letter to that friend, dated 30th Jan. 1713-14, wherein among other things, he jocularly complains of the envious reports which were propagated to his prejudice.

“ Some have said I am not a master in the  
“ Greek, who are either so themselves, or are  
“ not: if they are not, they cannot tell; and  
“ if they are, they cannot without having ca-  
“ techized me †.”

In this state of reciprocal amity they continued, till Mr. POPE's growing reputation, and superior genius in poetry, excited uneasy sentiments in his friend: and then it was that he encouraged Phillips, and others, in their clamours against him as a Tory and Jacobite, who had even assisted in writing the *Examiners*; and, under an affected care for the government, he endeavoured to conceal, even from himself, the real ground of his distrust. But from the injustice of such an insinuation, the late collection of Swift's Letters is sufficient to acquit Mr. POPE. In truth, so extremely cautious was he not to engage in any political contests, that though Sir Richard Steele had engaged his

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† Several have since endeavoured to propagate this envious slander in a fairer way, by criticising various passages of the translation; but still their attempts have been attended with the same impotency of malice or folly.



friendly assistance in a periodical paper called the *Guardian*, yet he discontinued all correspondence of that kind, on Sir Richard's giving a political turn to those papers.

But Mr. Addison's jealousy soon broke out more directly, and discovered itself first to Mr. POPE, and not long after to all the world. The circumstance which first opened Mr. POPE's eyes with regard to his friend's character, was his dissuading him strongly against adding his machinery to the *Rape of the Lock*, which Mr. POPE had no sooner resolved upon, than he communicated his scheme to Mr. Addison, not doubting but that he would be pleased with the improvement. He experienced the mortification nevertheless, of finding his friend receive it coldly, assuring him in a strain of artful adulation, that the poem, in its original state, was a delicious little thing, and as he expressed it, *Merum Sal*. As it was apparent that his objection to so noble a piece of invention, could not be the result of his judgment, Mr. POPE, not without reason, began to entertain suspicions of his sincerity.

It was not long before these suspicions were confirmed; for soon after this a translation of the first book of the *Iliad*, appeared under the name of Mr. Tickell; which coming out at a critical juncture, when it was publicly known that Mr. POPE was engaged on the same subject, and bearing the name of a dependant of Mr. Addison's, made our author more than suspect him to be privy to this  
unge-



ungenerous attempt: and after a diligent inquiry, and laying many concurring circumstances together, he was fully convinced, that it was not only published with Mr. Addison's participation, but was in truth his own performance \*. Not content with this base and invidious attempt, to supplant his friend in the public esteem, he privately made use of all the attention and deference which was paid to himself, as a man of critical learning, to depreciate Mr. POPE's translation; and did not scruple to declare, as Sir Richard Steele told Sir Samuel Garth, that Mr. Tickell's (that is, his own) was the best that had ever been done in any language. He would sometimes likewise say coolly, that both translations were well done, but that Tickell's had more of Homer.

Mr. POPE, in his first resentment of such usage, was resolved to expose this envious rival's version, in a severe critique upon it. The copy he had marked for this purpose now lies before me; in the margin of which, the several faults in translation, language, and numbers, are classed under their proper heads. The growing splendor however of his own works, so soon eclipsed the faint efforts of this invidious

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\* Sir Richard Steele, in his ninth edition of the *Drummer* (which Tickell had omitted to insert amongst Addison's works) in a long epistle to Congreve, affirms very intelligibly, that Addison, and not Tickell, was the translator of the first book of the *Iliad*, to which the latter had set his name.



competition, that he declined all thoughts of exposing its weakness and malignity ; and, with more becoming dignity, left it to the judgment and justice of the public, who did not fail to treat it with the neglect it deserved, and it has long since been consigned to oblivion \*.

Mr. POPE however, who was naturally irritable, could not avoid being very sensibly affect-

\* Dr. Parnelle, in one of his letters to Mr. POPE, expresses his sentiments, with respect to this rival translation, with great freedom.

“ I have seen the first book of Homer, which came out at a time when it could not but appear a kind of setting up against you. My opinion is, that you may, if you please, give them thanks who writ it. Neither the numbers nor the spirit have an equal mastery with yours ; but what surprises me more is, that a scholar being concerned, there should happen to be some mistakes in the author’s sense ; such as putting the light of Pallas’s eyes into the eyes of Achilles, making the taunt of Achilles to Agamemnon, (that he should have spoils when Troy should be taken) to be a cool and serious proposal : the translating what you call *ablution* by the word *offals*, and so leaving water out of the rite of lustration, &c.”

Dr. Berkeley likewise, Dean of Londonderry, bears testimony to the superior merit of our author’s translation, in the following passage :

“ — Some days ago, three or four gentlemen, and myself, exerting that right which all readers pretend to over authors, sat in judgment upon the two new translations of the first Iliad. Without partiality to my country-men, I assure you, they all gave the preference where it was due ; being unanimously of opinion, that yours was equally just to the sense with Mr. ———’s, and without comparison, more easy, more poetical, and more sublime.”



ed by Mr. Addison's dark and insidious behaviour: and their common friends were very solicitous to reconcile them under this misunderstanding. Mr. Jervas \* in particular, acquainted our author that in a conversation he had held with Mr. Addison, the latter expressed the highest professions of friendship for Mr. POPE, and assured Mr. Jervas, that notwithstanding many insinuations were spread to keep them at variance, it should not be his fault, if there was not the best understanding and intelligence between them.

To this assurance, Mr. POPE replied with an amiable and forgiving temper, that Mr. Addison was sure of his respects at all times, and of his real friendship, whenever he should think fit to know him for what he was.

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\* There appears to have been a very great friendship between this gentleman and Mr. POPE, which subsisted without interruption, till the death of the former, who, in his will, shewed his affectionate remembrance of our author, as we learn from a letter he addressed to Mr. Bethel, where he says——

“ A testimony of friendship and good opinion has been  
 “ left me by an old friend, from whom I had not the least  
 “ imagination of such a thing, Mr. Jervas; but it takes no  
 “ effect unless I out-live his widow, which is not very likely :  
 “ however, I think him absolutely in the right in giving  
 “ nothing from her, to whom he owed almost every thing ;  
 “ and the sum is considerable, viz. a *thousand pounds*. It is  
 “ the first legacy I ever had, and I hope I shall never have  
 “ another at the expence of any man's life, who would  
 “ think so kindly of me.”



Some time after this conversation, our author had an interview with Mr. Addison; at the particular desire of Sir Richard Steele, who was present, as was likewise Mr. Gay. Sir Richard took pains to conciliate them, but Mr. Addison's distant reserve and unbecoming behaviour rendered a reconciliation impracticable. So far from shewing the disposition he professed to Mr. Jervas, he rather betrayed an inclination to widen the breach, and gave offence by many taunting and depreciating expressions, which were uttered with such an affected calmness of temper, as perhaps they only can command, who never glowed with the warmth of generous feelings. Mr. POPE on the other hand, who had all the sensibility and indignant spirit of a delicate and noble mind, did not fail to return such indecent and offensive treatment, with the severity it deserved: till at length the dispute ran so high, that they parted without any ceremony on either side, and Mr. POPE, while he was yet warm with the provocation he had received, wrote those celebrated lines, in which he has so inimitably drawn Mr. Addison's *character* \*.

About

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\* The strokes of this character are so highly finished, that the reader, I am persuaded, will not be displeased with the following transcript.

After speaking of the wretched poetsasters of the times, he thus breaks forth—

“ Peace



About this time, Mr. Addison's son-in-law, the Earl of Warwick, told Mr. POPE that it was in vain to think of continuing upon good terms with a man so naturally jealous as Mr. Addison, who was hurt by Mr. POPE's excelling talents in poetry; and that to such a degree, that he had secretly encouraged Gildon to write something concerning Wycherley, in which he had taken occasion to abuse our author and his family in a virulent manner: and that Mr. Addison had actually paid this base instrument of

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" Peace to all such ! but were there one whose fires  
 " True genius kindles, and fair fame inspires ;  
 " Bled with each talent and each art to please,  
 " And born to write, converse, and live with ease :  
 " Should such a man, too fond to rule alone,  
 " Bear, like the Turk, no rival near the throne,  
 " View him with scornful, yet with jealous eyes,  
 " And hate for arts, that caus'd himself to rise ;  
 " Damn with faint praise, assent with civil leer,  
 " And, without sneering, teach the rest to sneer ;  
 " Willing to wound, and yet afraid to strike,  
 " Just hint a fault, and hesitate dislike ;  
 " Alike reserv'd to blame, or to commend,  
 " A tim'rous foe, and a suspicious friend ;  
 " Dreading ev'n fools, by flatterers besieg'd,  
 " And so obliging, that he ne'er oblig'd ;  
 " Like Cato, give his little senate laws,  
 " And sit attentive to his own applause ;  
 " While wits and templars ev'ry sentence raise,  
 " And wonder with a foolish face of praise—  
 " Who but must laugh, if such a man there be ?  
 " Who would not weep, if Atticus were he !"

Atterbury so well understood the force of these lines, that, in one of his letters to Mr. POPE, he says—" Since you now know where your strength lies, I hope you will not suffer that talent to lie unemployed."

defama-



defamation, the sum of ten guineas as the wages of his scurrility.

Such an assurance of Mr. Addison's treachery increased his indignation, but still he preserved a dignity in his resentment, which, while it did honour to himself, must have added to the mortification of his conscious rival. The very next day, he wrote Mr. Addison a letter, wherein he acquainted him that he was no stranger to the illiberality of his behaviour towards him, which, however, he scorned to imitate. That, on the contrary, he would openly, and to his face censure such failings in him as he judged reprehensible; and that he would at the same time do public justice to his merits. He added, that as a proof of this disposition towards him, he had sent him the inclosed; which was the CHARACTER above spoken of, long after published, by Mr. POPE, first, separately, and afterwards inserted in the Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot.

It must be observed that this was not till it had been printed by Curl and the Journalists of those times\*; and this just and manly rebuke conveyed in so open and spirited a manner, produced a very good effect; for Mr. Addison from this time to his death, which happened about three years after, always treated Mr. POPE with civility, and, as he believed, with justice.

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\* The falsehood propagated in *Mist's Journal*, that this Character was written after Mr. Addison's death, is fully refuted in the Testimonies prefixed to the Dunciad.



Besides this covert attack from Mr. Addison, which was most formidable, several other invidious attempts were openly made to decry the merit of this translation. Dennis, Gildon, Welfsted, Theobalds, &c. rose up against the translator in all the rage of criticism. The first wrote against him expressly: and Theobalds, after having given the translation the highest character in the *Censor*, afterwards thought proper, in his *Essay on the Art of sinking in Reputation*, to withdraw the encomiums he had passed on it, and to turn his panegyrick into censure. But candour and consistence are not among the attributes of envy and malevolence.

Conscious however, as it should seem, that their single efforts were too weak to check our author's rising fame, several of them joined their forces, and their united malice at length produced a wretched piece of criticism called the *POPIAD*.

These combined critics endeavoured to pick out what they called faults, but in most instances they only exposed their want of learning, taste, and judgment: and their works, with themselves, had been long ago consigned to oblivion, had not our poet taken a pride to collect them as they rose aloft in thin clouds of nonsense, as if to recognize the place of their birth in the moon. These he bound up in Volumes of all sizes, Twelves, Octavos, Quartos, and Folios, to which he has prefixed this motto from Job—*Behold my desire is that mine adversary had written a book.*



*book. Surely I would take it upon my shoulder, and bind it as a crown to me. C. 31. ver. 35.\**

Mr. POPE very wisely declined vindicating his writings from such trivial and insignificant objections; he treated them with a becoming and contemptuous silence. It must not be forgotten however, that our author was so unfortunate to incur the resentment of one, whose sex and learning claimed a different treatment. Mr. POPE having occasion in his preface, to speak of Madame Dacier, he did not, it seems, mention her with that distinction, which she thought due to her merit, and in truth, though Mr. POPE respected the lady's learning very much, yet he did not, as appears by one of his letters to the Duke of Buckingham, think quite so highly of it as the French did; esteeming it great complaisance in that polite nation, to allow her to be a critic of equal rank with her husband †.

This

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\* As these libellers were mostly anonymous, he has to each libel written the name of the composer, with occasional remarks. This portentous collection is still in being. And if any public library or museum, whose search is after curiosities, be desirous of enriching their common treasure with it, it will be freely at the service of that which asks first. It will give light to some parts of the Dunciad, whose heroes are unworthy of any light but their own.

† After pointing out some instances of the Lady's want of critical skill, Mr. POPE adds very politely—"Your Grace will believe me, that I did not search to find defects in a Lady; my employment upon the *Iliad* forced me to see  
O 2 "them;



This learned lady, piqued at the disregard with which she thought herself treated, took occasion, with great affectation of temper, to object to some of Mr. POPE's sentiments respecting Homer, and likewise to defend herself against a criticism which he made on a passage in her preface, where she gives antient manners the preference above modern.

But notwithstanding she endeavoured to hide, even from herself, the true motives of her criticism, yet they transpired, and flowed from her pen involuntarily in the following confession.

“ I own,” said she, “ I did not expect to find myself attacked by Mr. POPE, in a preface wherein *I might have expected some small token of acknowledgment, or at least some slight approbation.*”

In truth, Mr. POPE does not appear to have behaved with that polite and generous attention towards this fair critic, which her sex and merit demanded: more especially as he confessed to have received great helps from her.

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“ them; yet I have had so much of the French complaisance as to conceal her thefts; for wherever I have found her notes to be wholly another's (which is the case of some hundreds) I have barely quoted the true proprietor, without observing upon it. If Madam Dacier has seen my observations, she will be sensible of this conduct, but what effect it may have upon a Lady, I will not answer.”



He afterwards, however, made all the amends in his power. He wrote to her a very genteel and obliging letter, wherein he expressed his concern at having penned any thing to displease so excellent a genius: and she, on the other hand, with an amiable frankness, protested to forget all that had passed: so that these two great admirers and translators of Homer, ever after maintained towards each other the most perfect appearance of esteem and regard.

Having not only increased his fame, but established his fortune by this translation, he found himself in a situation to draw nearer the capital, and live more among his friends. With this view, having sold the little estate at Binfield, he purchased a house at Twickenham, whither he removed, with his father and mother, before the expiration of the year 1715.

This our author calls one of the grand æras of his life, and he took great delight in improving this new situation. The genius he displayed in these improvements was so elegant, that his seat became the resort of all persons of taste and curiosity. One of the chief ornaments of this agreeable retreat, was the grotto, the improvements of which, as his friend and editor assures us, was one of the favourite amusements of his declining years; so that not long before his death, by enlarging and encreasing it with a vast number of ores and minerals of the richest and rarest kinds, he made it one of the most elegant and romantic retirements: and in the



disposition of these materials, the beauty of his poetic genius appears to as much advantage, as in any of his best contrived poems.

Towards the beautifying of his gardens and grotto, our author was assisted by presents of various kinds, from several of his friends, procured from the various quarters of the globe.

Even his late Highness the Prince of Wales (father of our present sovereign) who was always amiably disposed to do honour to the deserving, condescended to contribute towards embellishing our author's retreat, as we learn by the following letter.

“ Dear Sir,

“ Since my last, I have received his Royal  
 “ Highness's commands to let you know that  
 “ he has a mind to present you, with some urns  
 “ or vases for your garden, and desires you  
 “ would write me word what number and size  
 “ will suit you best. You may have six small  
 “ ones for your Laurel Circus, or two large ones  
 “ to terminate points, as you like best. He  
 “ wants to have your answer soon.—Adieu,  
 “ my dearest friend.

“ Yours most affectionately,

“ G. Lyttelton.”

But,



But, notwithstanding our author took such delight in these improvements, his judgment taught him to regard them with a true philosophic eye. In one of his letters to Mr. Allen, speaking of his gardens and grotto, he says---

“ I am at a full stop at present, for a reason  
 “ that has put many a man to a full stop, the  
 “ having no more stock to spend; for till I can  
 “ procure more materials from the mines, and  
 “ from the quarries, my *mine-adventure*——

“ (Like the adventure of the bear and fiddle)  
 “ Must end, and break off in the middle.

“ However, it is some satisfaction, that as far  
 “ as I have gone, I am content; and that is all  
 “ a mortal man can expect: for no man finishes  
 “ any view he has, or any scheme he projects,  
 “ but by halves——

“ And life itself can nothing more supply  
 “ Then just to plan our projects, and to die.

“ Those men indeed, who marry and settle,  
 “ undertake for more; they undertake for future  
 “ ages. I am content to leave nothing but my  
 “ works behind me: which (whether good or  
 “ evil) will follow me, as *St. John* expresses it.  
 “ As to my *mines* and my *treasures*, they must  
 “ go together to God knows who! A sugar-  
 “ baker or a brewer may have the house and  
 “ gardens, and a booby, that chanced to be my  
 “ heir



“ heir at law, the other : except I happen to  
 “ disperse it to the poor in my own time \*.”

In another letter to the same gentleman, speaking of his improvements, he makes the following philosophical reflections :

“ Indeed, I think all my vanities of this  
 “ sort at an end ; and I will excuse them to the  
 “ connoisseurs, by setting over my door, in conclusion of them, *Parvum parva decent*. I  
 “ must charge you for encouraging some of  
 “ them, and others of my friends for encouraging others : but I have had my share too  
 “ of discouragement and censure from enemies ;  
 “ nevertheless, upon the whole, I neither repent  
 “ much nor am very proud, but tolerably pleased  
 “ with them †.”

His

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\* His yearly charities were very extensive, as the person to whom he wrote this letter well knew and delighted to aid.

† The reader, I trust, will not be displeased with the following description which our author himself gives of this romantic retreat, long before it received the last and principal improvements.

“ I have,” says he, “ put the last hand to my works of  
 “ this kind, in happily finishing the subterranean way and  
 “ grotto : I there found a spring of the clearest water, which  
 “ falls in a perpetual rill, that echoes through the cavern  
 “ day and night. From the river Thames, you see through  
 “ my arch up a walk of the wilderness, to a kind of open  
 “ temple, wholly composed of shells in the rustic manner ;  
 “ and



His father survived this removal only two years, dying suddenly at the age of seventy-five, after

“ and from that distance, under the temple, you look down  
 “ through a sloping arcade of trees, and see the sails on  
 “ the river passing suddenly and vanishing, as through a  
 “ perspective glass. When you shut the doors of this grotto,  
 “ it becomes on the instant, from a luminous room, a *came-  
 “ ra obscura*; on the walls of which all the objects of the  
 “ river, hills, woods, and boats, are forming a moving  
 “ picture in their visible radiations: and when you have a  
 “ mind to light it up, it affords you a very different  
 “ scene; it is finished with shells, interspersed with pieces  
 “ of looking glass in regular forms; and in the ceiling is a  
 “ star of the same material, at which, when a lamp (of an  
 “ orbicular figure of thin alabaster) is hung in the middle,  
 “ a thousand pointed rays glitter, and are reflected over the  
 “ place. There are connected to this grotto, by a narrow  
 “ passage, two porches, one towards the river, of smooth  
 “ stones full of light, and open; the other toward the gar-  
 “ den shadowed with trees, rough with shells, flints, and  
 “ iron-ore. The bottom is paved with simple pebble, as is  
 “ also the adjoining walk up the wilderness to the temple,  
 “ in the natural taste, agreeing not ill with the little drip-  
 “ ping murmur, and the aquatic idea of the whole place.  
 “ It wants nothing to complete it but a good statue with an  
 “ inscription, like that beautiful antique one which you  
 “ know I am so fond of:

“ *Hujus nymphe loci, sacri custodia fontis,*  
 “ *Dormio, dum blandae sentio murmur aquae.*  
 “ *Parce meum, quisquis tangis cavo marmora, somnum*  
 “ *Rumpere; si bibas, sive lavare, tace.*”

“ Nymph of the grot, these sacred springs I keep,  
 “ And to the murmurs of these waters sleep;  
 “ Ah, spare my slumbers, gently tread the cave!  
 “ And drink in silence, or in silence lave.

“ You’ll think I have been very poetical in this descrip-  
 “ tion, but it is pretty near the truth.”

This



after a life of health, innocence and tranquillity. He was buried at Twickenham by his son, whose piety erected a monument to his memory.

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This letter was written in 1725.--He afterwards, when it was in its more perfect state, wrote the following short poem upon it.

" Thou who shalt stop, where Thames' translucent wave  
 " Shines a broad Mirror, thro' the shadowy Cave ;  
 " Where ling'ring drops from min'ral Roofs distil,  
 " And pointed Crystals break the sparkling Rill,  
 " Unpolish'd Gemms no ray on Pride bestow,  
 " And latent Metals innocently glow :  
 " Approach. Great Nature studiously behold !  
 " And eye the Mine without a wish for Gold.  
 " Approach : But awful ! Lo ! th' Ægerian Grott,  
 " Where, nobly-pensive, St. JOHN fate and thought ;  
 " Where British sighs from dying WYNDHAM stole,  
 " And the bright flame was shot thro' MARCHMONT'S  
     " Soul.  
 " Let such, such only, tread this sacred Floor,  
 " Who dare to love their Country, and be poor\*."

Our poet's modesty is very conspicuous in these noble verses. He warns an awful approach to his grotto, on account of the reverence due to his *friends*, who fate and thought there ; without saying one word of himself. But what renders it truly awful, is its having been the seat of his own study and meditation, which will afford instruction and entertainment to the latest posterity.

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\* These verses were translated into Latin, and likewise imitated in Greek and Latin.

Mr. Doddsley likewise wrote a copy of verses on this grotto, intitled the *Cave of Pope*, a prophesy. Which is preserved, with other fragments, in a pamphlet, called a Plan of Mr. Pope's Garden, as it was left at his Death, with a Plan and perspective View of the Grotto, all taken by J. Serle, his Gardener.

His



His father, however, before he died, enjoyed the heartfelt pleasure of seeing his son the object of public admiration, caressed by the worthy, and dreaded by the worthless : and in the way of making a genteel fortune by the most noble and liberal means, the exercise of his intellectual endowments.

Our author's good fortune, however, did not make him indolent ; for in the year 1717, during the time of his being engaged in the translation of Homer, he published a collection of all the poetical pieces he had written before ; and in the year 1721, he gave a new edition of *Shakespeare*, which has been said not to have answered the expectations of the public.

Nevertheless, however the public may have been extravagantly sanguine in expecting more than was undertaken or intended, or within the power of an editor to perform ; yet, certain it is, that this edition of Mr. POPE's has no small share of merit.

His *judgment* was seen in doing what had never been done before, in giving the text from the collated copies of the old editions of the plays. His *taste*, in marking the finest passages with inverted commas ; and his *elegance*, in banishing all the poet's and players' ribaldry and nonsense from the text.

The same critics who fell upon this edition for being too scanty, fell upon his friend's edition (which comprized his) for being too full, it sup-  
plying



plying what was wanting in the other, by explanatory notes and emendations of the text.

The early editions were little better than one great heap of typographical errors ; which made Mr. POPE, who first understood the miserable condition of his author, cry out in the words of Virgil :

“ ——— *Laniatum corpore toto*  
 “ *Deiphobum vidi, lacerum crudeliter ora ;*  
 “ *Ora manusque ambas, populataque tempora*  
     “ *raptis*  
 “ *Auribus, et truncas inhonesto vulnere nares.”*

The truth is, that CRITICISM (which Longinus esteemed to be the consummation of human literature) is thought to be the easy task of every witling. What has led them and their readers into this mistake, and will for ever keep them both in it, is the not distinguishing between the *discovery* of corrupted passages, and the *caviling* at those emendations which are the fruits of it. To discover the corruption of an author's text, and by a happy sagacity to restore it to that sense in which it was first conceived by the author, is no easy matter ; but when once the discovery is made, to cavil at the emended word, and to support the cavil by another equivalent, is the easy and constant achievement of these doughty Critics. It is the easiest, and at the same time the dullest, of all literary efforts. Yet we have seen editions of this author, in which nothing else has been attempted ; and we may now predict, that nothing else will ever be performed by editors who have spent their time  
 and



and impaired their sight and intellects in collecting and collating the *old quartos*.

Should it be thought, notwithstanding, that our author, as an editor, failed in doing justice to our great dramatic bard ; yet, it must be confessed, that he testified a very amiable regard to his memory, by being chiefly instrumental in the erection of the monument in Westminster Abbey, to which he wrote an inscription that has been censured by critics of the same stamp, as unclassical. Among others, Dr. Mead objected to the Latinity of the expression *amor publicus*, on the authority of Patrick the dictionary-maker ; to which POPE well replied,---“ That he would “ allow a dictionary-maker to understand a single “ word, but not two words put together.”

After the translation of the Iliad was finished, Mr. POPE engaged in the translation of the Odyssy.

The Odyssy was published in the same manner as the Iliad, and sold on the same conditions, except, that instead of *twelve*, he had only *six* hundred pounds for the copy. In this latter work, he was assisted by Broome and Fenton ; who, in their turns, were assisted in what they did by Mr. POPE's amendments and corrections throughout. To the first of these he gave 600 *l.* and to the latter 300 *l.* These two gentlemen had formed a design of translating the Odyssy, while Mr. POPE was employed upon the Iliad ; and by the time he had finished it, they



they had gone through several books of the *Odyſſey*, which they deſired him to peruſe. Mr. POPE complied with their requeſt; but at the ſame time acquainted them that he had entertained the like intentions, and that having made a conſiderable progreſs in the execution of them, he would, with their conſent, make uſe of what they had entrusted him with, for the more ſpeedy advancement of the work: and they very readily acceded to a propoſition of this nature, from a friend of ſuch ſuperior poetical talents.

Mr. POPE's candid and diſintereſted conduct, however, did not ſecure him from the calumny of malevolence; and it was ſome years afterwards imputed to him, that he ſold the labours of others under his own name. To which he calmly replied, with conſcious integrity, that it ſhould have been added, "*he had firſt bought them.*" Mr. Broome, who wrote the notes, gives an account, at the concluſion of them, of his ſhare in the performance.

When the ſubſcription books were compleated, Mr. POPE, as has been intimated, ſold the copy to Mr. Lintot, and obtained a patent for his ſole printing of it for fourteen years, as he had before done with reſpect to the *Iliad*. The former patent however was drawn up with ſuch a variation from the latter, as the difference of the caſe required. In the former, it was recited that he had *undertaken* a tranſlation of the *Odyſſey*; in the latter it was ſaid, that he had *translated* the *Iliad*. Mr. Lintot made no ob-  
jection



jection to this variance in the form of the two patents, but when the sale of the work fell short of the expectations he had formed from the success of the *Iliad*, then he took notice of the difference between them, and complained (in the true spirit of a Bookseller) that Mr. POPE had made use of some management to make him believe that the patents were alike.

Among other malicious insinuations, which were thrown out, by those who maligned Mr. POPE's fame, it was imputed to him in *Mist's* Journal, that having undertaken the *Odyssy*, "and secured the success by a numerous subscription, he employed some underling to perform what according to his proposals should come from his own hand."

But to this injurious charge, it is sufficient to oppose the words of Mr. POPE's printed proposals for the *Odyssy*.

"I take this occasion to declare, that the subscription for Shakespeare belongs wholly to Mr. Tonson; and that the future benefit of THIS *Proposal* is not solely for my own use, but for that of two of my friends, who have assisted me in this work."

The translation of the *Odyssy* being completed in the year 1725, he engaged in the following year, in concert with his two ingenious friends Dean Swift and Dr. Arbuthnot, in printing several volumes of *Miscellanies*. Among these



these the most conspicuous are the *Memoirs of Martinus Scriblerus*; a satire projected by this excellent triumvirate, on the abuses of human learning; and which they proposed to execute in the manner of Cervantes, under a continued narrative of feigned adventures. "They had observed," says Mr. POPE's friend and Editor, "that those abuses still kept their ground, against all that the gravest and ablest authors could say to discredit them; they therefore concluded that all the force of ridicule was wanting to quicken their disgrace: and as the abuses had been already detected by sober reasoning, ridicule was here very seasonably applied; and truth was in no danger of suffering by the premature use of so powerful an instrument."

But the separation of our author and his friends, which soon after happened, with the death of one, and the infirmities of the other, put a final period to their design, when they had only drawn out an imperfect essay toward it, under the title of the first Book of the *Memoirs of Scriblerus*.

"Moral satire," continues the editor, "never lost more than in the defeat of this project; in the execution of which, each of this illustrious triumvirate would have found exercise for his own peculiar talent; besides constant employment for those they all had in common. Dr. Arbuthnot was skilled in every thing which related



“ to *science*: Mr. POPE was a master in the  
 “ *fine arts*; and Dr. Swift excelled in the *know-*  
 “ *ledge of the world*. WIT they had all in  
 “ equal measure, and in a measure so large, that  
 “ no age perhaps ever produced three men, to  
 “ whom *Nature* had more bountifully bestowed  
 “ it, or in whom *Art* had brought it to higher  
 “ perfection.”

A very pleasant account of this undertaking, and of the share which Dr. Arbuthnot \* and Mr. POPE took in it, is to be found in a letter from the former to Dean Swift.

“ Pray remember Martin †, who is an inno-  
 “ cent fellow, and will not disturb your soli-  
 “ tude. The ridicule of medicine is so copious  
 “ a subject, that I must only here and there  
 “ touch it. I have made him study physic from  
 “ the apothecary’s bills, where there is a good  
 “ plentiful field for the satire upon the present  
 “ practice. One of his projects was by a stamp  
 “ upon blistering plaisters and melilot by the

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\* Mr. POPE used to say, that of all the men he ever met with or heard of, Dr. Arbuthnot had the most prolific wit; and that, in this quality, Swift only held the second place. No adventure of any consequence ever occurred on which the Doctor did not write a pleasant essay, in a great folio paper-book, which used to lie in his parlour. Of these, however, he was so negligent, that while he was writing them at one end, he suffered his children to tear them out at the other, for their paper kites.

† Martinus Scriblerus, of whom POPE, Arbuthnot, and others were to write the Memoirs.



“ yard, to raise money for the government, and  
 “ to give it to Radcliffe and others to farm.  
 “ But there was like to be a petition from the  
 “ inhabitants of London and Westminster, who  
 “ had no mind to be flead. There was a pro-  
 “ blem about the doses of purging medicines  
 “ published four years ago, shewing, that they  
 “ ought to be in proportion to the bulk of the  
 “ patient; from thence Martin endeavours to  
 “ determine the question about the weight of  
 “ the antient men, by the doses of physic that  
 “ were given them. One of the best inventions  
 “ was a map of diseases, for the three cavities  
 “ of the body, and one for the external parts;  
 “ just like the four quarters of the world. Then  
 “ the great diseases are like capital cities, with  
 “ their symptoms all like streets and suburbs,  
 “ with the roads that lead to other diseases. It  
 “ is thicker set with towns, than any Flanders  
 “ map you ever saw. Radcliffe is painted at  
 “ the corner of the map, contending for the  
 “ universal empire of this world, and the rest  
 “ of the physicians opposing his ambitious  
 “ designs, with a project of a treaty of partition  
 “ to settle peace.

“ There is an excellent subject of ridicule  
 “ from some of the German physicians, who  
 “ set up a sensitive Soul, as a sort of a first  
 “ minister to the rational. Helmont calls him  
 “ Archæus. Dolæus calls him Microcosmetor.  
 “ He has under him several other genii, that  
 “ reside in the particular parts of the body,  
 “ particularly Prince Cardimelech in the heart;



“ Gasteronax in the stomach, and the Plastick  
 “ prince in the organs of generation. I be-  
 “ lieve I could make you laugh at the explica-  
 “ tion of distempers from the wars and alliances  
 “ of those princes; and how the first minister  
 “ gets the better of his mistress *Anima Ratio-*  
 “ *nalis*.

“ The best is, that it is making reprisals upon  
 “ the politicians, who are sure to allegorize all  
 “ the animal œconomy into state affairs. POPE  
 “ has been collecting high flights of poetry,  
 “ which are very good; they are to be solemn  
 “ nonsense. I thought upon the following the  
 “ other day, as I was going into my coach, the  
 “ dust being troublesome.

“ The dust in smaller particles arose  
 “ Than those, which fluid bodies do compose:  
 “ Contraries in extreams do often meet,  
 “ ’Twas now so dry, that you might call it wet.

“ I do not give you these hints to divert you,  
 “ but that you may have your thoughts, and  
 “ work upon them.”

About this time, in the year 1726, our au-  
 thor narrowly escaped from an accident, which  
 was very near proving fatal to him, as he was  
 returning home from a visit in a friend’s cha-  
 riot, which on passing a bridge happened to be  
 overturned, and thrown with the horses into  
 the river. The glasses were up, and he not able  
 to break them; so that he was in immediate



danger of drowning, when the postilion, who had just recovered himself, came to his relief, and after breaking the glass which was uppermost, took him out and carried him to the bank: but a fragment of the broken glass, cut one of his hands so desperately, that he lost the use of two of his fingers.

To this account he refers in one of his letters to Dean Swift, dated 16th Nov. 1726, where he says;

“ My two least fingers on one hand, hang  
 “ impediments to the others, like uselefs depen-  
 “ dents who only take up room, and never are  
 “ active or assistant to our wants; I shall never  
 “ be much the better for them.”

Voltaire was at that time in England, and on this occasion sent POPE a consolatory letter; it was written in these very words.

“ SIR,

“ I hear this moment of your sad adventure.  
 “ That water you fell in, was not Hippocrene’s  
 “ water, otherwise it would have respected you.  
 “ Indeed I am concerned beyond expression for  
 “ the danger you have been in, and more for  
 “ your wounds. Is it possible that those fingers  
 “ which have written the Rape of the Lock, and  
 “ the Criticism, which have dressed Homer so  
 “ becomingly in an English coat, should have  
 “ been so barbarously treated. Let the hand of  
 “ Dennis, or of your poetasters be cut off. Yours

“ is



“ is sacred. I hope, Sir, you are now perfectly  
 “ recovered, really your accident concerns me  
 “ as much as all the disasters of a master ought  
 “ to affect his scholar. I am sincerely, Sir, with  
 “ the admiration which you deserve,

“ Your most humble servant,

“ In my Lord Bolingbroke’s  
 “ house, Friday at noon.

“ VOLTAIRE.”

This letter may enable the reader to pass a judgment on that elegant account published at the same time in English, by this ingenious Frenchman \*, of the civil wars of France, the subject of his *Henriad*.

Our

\* It is much to be lamented that this lively writer, who is so eminent for his literary abilities, should be shamefully deficient in the moral and social virtues. How lightly he regarded the rules of decency, and the dictates of faith and honour, may be collected from the following anecdotes—

Mr. POPE told one of his most intimate friends, that the poet Voltaire had got some recommendation to him when he came to England; and that the first time he saw him was at Twickenham, where he kept him to dinner. Mrs. Pope (a most excellent woman) was then alive; and observing that this stranger, who appeared to be entirely emaciated, had no stomach, she expressed her concern for his want of appetite; on which Voltaire gave so indelicate and brutal an account of the occasion of his disorder, contracted in Italy, that the poor Lady was obliged immediately to rise from table. When Mr. POPE related this, his friend asked him how he could forbear ordering his servant John to thrust Voltaire head and shoulders out of his house: he replied, there was more of ignorance in this conduct, than a purposed affront.



Our author having by his translation of Homer and other works, placed himself in circumstances of

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affront :—That Voltaire came into England, as other foreigners do, on a prepossession, that not only all religion, but all common decency of morals, was lost amongst us.

Mr. POPE said further, that Voltaire was a spy for the court, while he staid in England : of which he gave his friend the following instance. When the first Occasional Letter to Sir R. Walpole came out (by which circumstance the reader may collect the time of Voltaire's voyage hither) he made Mr. POPE a visit at Twickenham ; and walking with him in his garden, he said, POPE, this *occasional Letter* alarms the court extremely. It is finely written. As you converse much with the best pens conversant in public business, you must know the author. You may safely tell this secret to a stranger, who has no concerns with your national quarrels. Mr. POPE said, he perfectly understood him, as he knew his character : and, to make a trial, which hardly needed any, he replied, “ Mr. Voltaire, you are a man of honour ; “ I may safely, I know, trust an important secret to your “ breast. I myself wrote it.” Voltaire, after lanching out into high encomiums on the performance, was, he perceived, impatient to get away ; and next day he heard, that all the court reported that he was the author. This infamy of the man gave Mr. POPE and his friends much occasion of mirth, and much light in the manner how he ought to be treated. How he was treated ever after by Mr. POPE himself, appears from what past on Voltaire's coming to take leave of Mr. POPE, on his return to France. After the common compliments had passed, Mr. POPE told his friend that Voltaire took his leave of him in these words, “ And now I am come “ to bid farewell to a man who never treated me seriously “ from the first hour of my acquaintance with him to this “ moment.”—Mr. POPE said the observation was just, and the reason of his conduct has been given above.

Voltaire, however, constantly paid court to Mr. POPE, and treated him with all the deference and respect due to his merit ; though, at the same time, he did not scruple to speak  
lightly



of affluence, he was now at liberty to follow the true bent of his genius.

The independence of his fortune did not make him negligent of his fame, nor unmindful in the duty which he owed to society, in the application of those talents, which nature had so bountifully bestowed upon him.

His natural benevolence suggested to him that he could not better serve the interest of society, than, as himself expresses it, by writing a book to bring mankind to look upon this life with comfort and pleasure; and put morality in good humour.

With this amiable disposition, he applied his poetical talents to compose the treatise, intitled the *Essay on Man*; in which he enforced the most important moral and religious truths, with all the logical method of argument, and embellished them with all the graces and ornaments of elegant and harmonious composition.

Our author himself, with decent pride, claims the merit of this laudable exertion of his talents, where he says, in his epistle to Arbuthnot—

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lightly of some of the most eminent writers in this country : particularly of Milton. It is well known, that while this very ingenious and sprightly freethinker was in England, the darling subject of his conversation was Milton ; whom he once took occasion to abuse for his Episode of *Death and Sin*. Whereupon a certain wit turned the laugh against him, by the following smart impromptu :

“ Thou art so witty, wicked, and so thin,

“ Thou serv’st at once for MILTON, DEATH, and SIN.”



“ That not in Fancy’s maze he wander’d long,  
 “ But stoop’d to truth, and moraliz’d his song.”

Which, as the learned Editor remarks, may be said no less in commendation of his *literary* than of his *moral* character.

Mr. POPE’s sagacity soon led him to discover where his superior excellence lay; and, being naturally of a devout and moral cast of mind, he found this work so happily adapted to his genius, that he even complained of its being too easy, as we learn from a letter, addressed by Lord Bolingbroke to Dean Swift, wherein his Lordship says——

“ Bid him (POPE) talk to you of the work  
 “ he is about : it is a fine one, and will be in  
 “ his hands an original. His sole complaint  
 “ is, that he finds it too easy in the execution.  
 “ This flatters his laziness. It flatters my  
 “ judgment; who always thought, that *univer-*  
 “ *sal* as his talents are, this is eminently and  
 “ peculiarly his, above all the writers I know,  
 “ living or dead; I do not except Horace.”

It has been understood that our author engaged in this undertaking by the advice of Lord Bolingbroke; but it is for the honour of Mr. POPE’s memory, to explain how far Lord Bolingbroke was instrumental in the production of this admirable essay : with which explanation we are furnished by the author of the View of Lord Bolingbroke’s Philosophy.

Mr.



Mr. POPE has indeed permitted Lord Bolingbroke to be considered by the public, as his *philosopher* and *guide*: and in their conversations respecting the impious complaints against providence, on account of the unequal distribution of things, natural and moral, in the present system, they agreed, that such complaints were most commodiously answered on the Platonic principle of THE BEST.

This encouraged our poet to philosophize, and the fruits of his speculations are to be found in this celebrated Essay; in which, if you will take his Lordship's word, POPE was so far from putting his prose in verse, (as has been invidiously suggested) that he put POPE's verse into prose.

It is observable, that they agreed in the principle, that *whatever is, is right*: and Mr. POPE thought they had agreed in the question to which this principle was to be applied. But time has since shewn that they differed very widely: and, to state this difference with greater fulness and perspicuity, it is proper to consider against whom they write.

Mr. POPE's *Essay on Man* is a real vindication of providence against libertines and atheists; who quarrel with the present constitution of things, and deny a future state. To these he answers, that *whatever is, is right*; and he assigns this reason, that *we see only a part of the moral system, and not the whole*. Therefore  
these



these irregularities serving to great purposes, such as the fuller manifestation of God's goodness and justice, they are *right*.

On the other hand, Lord Bolingbroke's essays are a *pretended* vindication of providence against an *imaginary* confederacy between *divines* and *atheists*; who use a common principle, namely, the *irregularities of God's moral government here*, for different ends and purposes; the one, to establish a *future state*; the other, to discredit the *being of a God*.

His Lordship, who opposes their different conclusions, endeavours to overthrow their common principle, by his friend's maxim, that *whatever is, is right*; not because the present state of our *moral world* (which is part only of a more general system) is necessary for the greater perfection of the whole, but because our *moral world* is an entire system of itself.

His Lordship applies the maxim, no better (as might be expected) than he understands it. Mr. POPE, as has been observed, urges it against atheists and libertines, who say that the constitution of things is faulty; so that the reply, *whatever is, is right*, is pertinent in him. His Lordship, on the other hand, directs it against divines, who say, indeed, that this constitution is imperfect, if considered separately, because it is a part only of a whole, but are as far as his Lordship from calling it *faulty*: therefore the  
reply,



reply, that *whatever is, is right*, is, in him, impertinent.

In a word, the poet directs it against atheists and libertines, in support of religion, properly so called; the philosopher, against divines, in support of religion, improperly so called, namely NATURALISM; and the success is answerable. Mr. POPE's argument is manly, systematical and convincing: Lord Bolingbroke's, confused, prevaricating and inconsistent.

Lord Bolingbroke, however, to the last, standing in awe of his friend's piety and virtue, endeavoured to conceal his true principles from him: and he imposed upon him, in this respect, so effectually, that Mr. POPE would not credit any thing that tended to undeceive him.

A few days before Mr. POPE's death, he would be carried to London, to dine with Mr. Murray in Lincoln's-Inn Fields, whom he loved with the fondness of a father; and he was solicitous that Lord Bolingbroke and Mr. Warburton, the present Bishop of Gloucester, should be of the party.

Some time before, Mr. Warburton being with Mr. POPE at Twitnam, Mr. Hook came in and told them, he had supped the night before at Battersea with Lord Bolingbroke; when his Lordship in conversation advanced the strangest notions concerning the *moral attributes* of the Deity, which amounted to an express denial of them. This account gave Mr. POPE much uneasiness,



casiness, and he told Mr. Hook, with some peevish heat, that he was sure he was mistaken. The other replied as warmly, that he thought he had sense enough not to mistake a man who spoke plainly, and in a language he understood. Here the matter dropped; but Mr. POPE was so shocked at this imputation, that he did not rest till he had asked Lord Bolingbroke whether Mr. Hook was not mistaken. Lord Bolingbroke assured him Mr. Hook misunderstood him. This assurance, Mr. POPE, with great pleasure, acquainted Mr. Warburton with, the next time he saw him.

Both Lord Bolingbroke and Mr. POPE were so full of this matter, that at dinner at Mr. Murray's, the conversation, among other things, naturally turned on this subject; when, from a very suspicious remark of his Lordship's, Mr. Warburton took occasion to speak of the clearness of our notions concerning the *moral attributes*; which occasioned a debate, that ended in some warmth on his Lordship's side.

This anecdote not only furnishes a vindication of Mr. POPE's religious sentiments, but likewise obviates the unjust reflections which have been thrown on the Bishop of Gloucester, as if he had not attacked his Lordship's impiety till after his death\*.

But

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\* His Lordship imposed on his friend Swift, in the same low manner, on the like occasion. His other learned friend  
of



But though his Lordship thought fit to keep his principles secret from his friend, as well as from

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of the triumvirate, as he calls them, Dr. Arbuthnot, was above the imposition, as never doubting of his Lordship's principles, and esteeming him accordingly. Dr. Swift having heard something of the licentiousness of his opinions, with the affection of a friend, that does honour to his memory, had told him what he heard, in a manner which shewed he gave credit to it. His Lordship, in a letter, dated September 12th, 1724, replies in these words.—“ I must, “ on this occasion, set you right as to an opinion, which I “ should be *very sorry* to have you entertain concerning me. “ The term *esprit fort*, in English, freethinker, is, according to my observation, usually applied to them whom I “ look upon to be the *pests of society*: because their endeavours are directly to loosen the bands of it, and to take “ at least one curb out of the mouth of that wild beast man; “ when it would be well, if he was checked by half a score “ others.—If indeed, by *esprit fort*, or freethinker, you “ mean a man who makes a free use of his reason, who “ searches after truth without passion or prejudice, and adheres inviolably to it; you mean a wise and honest man; “ and *such a one as I labour to be*.—Such *freethinkers* as these, “ I am sure you cannot, in your *apostolical* capacity, disprove: *For since the truth of the divine revelation of Christianity is as evident as matters of fact, on the belief of which so much depends, ought to be, and agreeable to all our ideas of justice; these freethinkers must needs be Christians on the best foundation*; on that which St. Paul himself established, “ I think it was St. Paul, *omnia probate, quod bonum est tenete*.” This was in 1724; but vice proceeded, as the poet says, with such giant strides, that in 1732, that incomparable man, Dr. Arbuthnot, writes thus to Swift—“ My “ neighbour, the prose-man, is wiser, and more cowardly “ and despairing than ever. He talks me into a fit of vapours “ —I dream at night of a chain and rowing in the galleys. “ But thank God he has not taken from me the freedom I “ have been accustomed to in my discourse (even with the “ greatest persons to whom I have access) in defending the “ cause



from the public; yet, after the prodigious success of the *Essay on Man*, he ungenerously used to make the poet, then alive and at his devotion, the frequent topic of ridicule among their common acquaintance, as a man who understood nothing of his own principles, nor saw to what they naturally led.

While things were in this state, M. de Croufaz wrote some malignant and absurd *Remarks* on the *Essay on Man*, accusing it of Spinozism and Naturalism, &c. These Remarks, by accident, fell into the hands of the author of the *Divine Legation*, &c. and mere resentment against an ill-natured caviller, induced him to write a defence of the *first epistle*, which being well received, he applied himself to defend the rest, on the same principles of natural and revealed religion, against the blundering misrepresentations of the Swift philosopher, and of a certain French translator of the *Essay* in verse, by whom M. de Croufaz had been frequently misled.

In truth, the principal objection to the *Essay on Man* was its obscurity, which was intimated to our author, on its first appearance, by his friend Swift \*. The

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“ cause of liberty, virtue, and religion : for the last, I have  
 “ the satisfaction of suffering some of the ignominy that  
 “ belonged to the first professors. This has been my lot,  
 “ from a steady resolution I have taken of giving these igno-  
 “ rant fellows battle upon all occasions.”

\* “ I confess,” says Swift, “ in some places I was forced  
 “ to read twice. I believe I told you before what the Duke  
 “ of



The obscurity of the poem made a comment the more necessary; and Mr. POPE, who was naturally on the side of religion, embraced the sense given to the essay, with the utmost pleasure and satisfaction †.

It cannot be supposed, however, that his Lordship took the same delight in seeing his pupil thus reasoned out of his hands; or, what was worse, in seeing him republish \* his essay with a defence, which put the poem on the side of religion, and the poet out of the necessity of supporting himself on his Lordship's system, when he should condescend to impart it to him: or, what was worst of all, in seeing him, at the commentator's instance, restore a great number of the best and most sublime lines, struck out of the manuscript, which no longer left his religious sentiments equivocal.

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“ of Dorset said to me on the occasion, concerning the opinion of a judge here who knows you, and told him, that on the first reading these Essays, he was much pleased, but found some lines a little dark; on the second, most of them cleared up, and his pleasure encreased; on the third, he had no doubts remaining, and that he admired the whole.”

† This appears from the letters he wrote to the learned commentator on that occasion, wherein he candidly acknowledges the obscurity of the piece, and, among other things, says,—  
 “ You have made my system as clear as I ought to have done, and could not: you understand me as well as I do myself, but you express me better than I could myself.”

\* This poem was republished in the year 1740, with the commentary.

With



With respect to this essay, it is perhaps the most concise and perfect system of ethics in any language: it is one of the desiderata which Lord Bacon has marked out in his *de augmentis scientiarum*, a work which, as will be shewn, our author seems to have had in his eye throughout. But it would be needless to detain the reader with a particular analysis of this treatise, as the design, method and end of this work, is fully and accurately explained and illustrated by the excellent commentary subjoined to it.

Nevertheless, as it is proposed not only to give the history of our author, but likewise a critique on his writings, so much notice must be taken of the conduct of this essay, as may serve to exemplify its most capital beauties and defects.

The first epistle considers the nature and state of man with respect to the Universe. Here the poet shews how imperfect our reasonings must be both with respect to God and Man: For that as we know no more of man, than what we can learn from his station here; so we know no more of God, than we see of his dispensations in this station. This leads the poet to the following sublime description of God's omniscience, followed by a just reproof of man's blind presumption.

“ He, who thro’ vast immensity can pierce,  
 “ See worlds on worlds compose one uni-  
 “ verse,

“ Observe



- “ Observe how system into system runs,  
 “ What other planets circle other suns,  
 “ What vary’d Being peoples ev’ry star,  
 “ May tell why Heav’n has made us as we  
     “ are.  
 “ But of this frame, the bearings and the ties,  
 “ The strong connections, nice dependencies,  
 “ Gradations just, has thy pervading soul  
 “ Look’d thro’? or can a part contain the  
     “ whole?  
 “ *Is the great chain, that draws all to agree,*  
 “ And drawn supports, upheld by God, or  
     “ thee?”

These noble and philosophic sentiments are enforced with such strength of reasoning and dignity of expression, as at once to awe the impious and check the presumptuous, who dare to scrutinize and arraign the wisdom and justice of the divine dispensations.

It is to be regretted however, that the line marked in Italics, should make a part of the foregoing extract. It is the most heavy, languid, and unpoetical of any perhaps that ever escaped from our author’s pen: and the expletive *to* before the verb, is unpardonable\*.

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\* It has been observed, nevertheless, by the present Bishop of Gloucester, one of the most acute critics of this or any age, that the slowness of the line here objected to, was, perhaps, purposely intended to express in the sound the slow, though powerful operations of providence, to the great end here pointed out.



Having exposed the absurdity of prying into the manner in which God conducts this wonderful system, he proceeds to shew that such knowledge, if attainable, would be injurious to our happiness, which he proves by the following strong and beautiful exemplifications.

- “Heav’n from all creatures hides the book of  
 “fate,  
 “All but the page prescrib’d, their present  
 “state :  
 “From brutes what men, from men what  
 “spirits know :  
 “Or who could suffer Being here below ?  
 “The lamb thy riot dooms to bleed to-day,  
 “Had he thy Reason, would he skip and play ?  
 “Pleas’d to the last, he crops the flow’ry  
 “food,  
 “And licks the hand just rais’d to shed his  
 “blood.  
 “Oh blindness to the future ! kindly giv’n,  
 “That each may fill the circle mark’d by  
 “Heav’n :  
 “Who sees with equal eye, as God of all,  
 “A hero perish, or a sparrow fall,  
 “Atoms or systems into ruin hurl’d,  
 “And now a bubble burst, and now a world.”

It argues a fine imagination to be capable of selecting such striking contrasts.

The poet goes on to shew that our best comfort is the *hope* of a happy futurity, which he recommends by the example of the poor Indian,



to whom also nature hath given this common hope of mankind.

- " Lo, the poor Indian ! whose untutor'd mind  
 " Sees God in clouds, or hears him in the  
   " wind ;  
 " His soul, proud Science never taught to stray  
 " Far as the solar walk, or milky way ;  
 " Yet simple Nature to his hope has giv'n,  
 " Behind the cloud-topt hill, an humbler  
   " heav'n ;  
 " Some safer world in depth of woods embrac'd,  
 " Some happier island in the watry waste ;  
 " Where slaves once more their native land  
   " behold,  
 " No fiends torment, no Christians thirst for  
   " gold.  
 " To Be, contents his natural desire,  
 " He asks no Angel's wing, no Seraph's fire ;  
 " But thinks, admitted to that equal sky,  
 " His faithful dog shall bear him company."

The simplicity, humility and humanity of the poor Indian are admirably pictured in these lines, of which the fine versification is perhaps the least beauty. There is something exquisitely plaintive and pathetic in his humble hope for that *safer* world, where slaves may once more behold their native land ; and in the next line, the poet has with great address turned his indignant satire against the diabolical barbarities practised on that part of our species, who only differ from us in complexion : while they who enslave and torment them, are no more like



men, than they are like Christians. Our poet calls them Christians, to shew their cruelty in a more affecting light. Satire never cuts so keenly, as when humanity gives it an edge †.

Our author having, in the next place, traced the source of *moral* evil, which proceeds from the abuse of man's free will, he then shews, by way of analogy, that it tends to the good of the universe, in like manner as *natural* evil tends to the good of this globe.

- “ If plagues or earthquakes break not Heav'n's  
 “ design,  
 “ Why then a *Borgia*, or a *Catiline* ?  
 “ Who knows but He, whose hand the light-  
 “ ning forms,  
 “ Who heaves old Ocean, and who wings the  
 “ storms;  
 “ Pours fierce Ambition in a Cæsar's mind,  
 “ Or turns young Ammon loose to scourge  
 “ mankind ?”

How admirably, in these lines, are the reasonings of moral philosophy exemplified with all the force and beauty of analogical argument, and illustrated with all the sublime of poetry !

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† Witness these lines, among others, in one of his satires, where he speaks of a great man who had lost his stomach by intemperance, on seeing the hearty appetite of a beggar :

- “ Call'd *happy dog* the Beggar at his door ;  
 “ And envy'd thirst and hunger to the poor.”



The folly of man's wishing for visionary advantages, not adapted to his nature, is next exposed.

" The blifs of Man (could Pride that blessing  
" find)

" Is not to act or think beyond mankind ;

" No pow'rs of body or of soul to share,

" But what his nature and his state can bear,

" Why has not Man a microscopic Eye ?

" For this plain reason, Man is not a Fly.

" Say what the use, were finer optics giv'n,

" T' inspect a mite, not comprehend the  
" heav'n ?

" Or touch, if tremblingly alive all o'er,

" To smart and agonize at ev'ry pore ?

" Or quick effluvia darting thro' the brain,

" Die of a rose in aromatic pain ?

" If Nature thunder'd in his op'ning ears,

" And stunn'd him with the music of the  
" spheres,

" How would he wish that Heav'n had left  
" him still

" The whisp'ring Zephyr, and the purling  
" rill ?

" Who finds not Providence all good and wise,

" Alike in what it gives, and what denies ?"

With what sprightly raillery, with what exquisite imagination, has the poet ridiculed the absurdity of those discontented mortals, who covet superfluous, nay pernicious endowments ? The whole passage is so animated, so ornate and poetical, that it is with regret we point out any



imperfection in it. Nevertheless, as the learned commentator has remarked, the illustration drawn from the music of the spheres, is certainly misplaced, as the precision of philosophical argument required the poet to employ the *real* objects of sense only.

The poet farther shews that the indulging of man's extravagant desires would not only be useless and injurious to him, but that it would break into the order of the creation, wherein all systems and beings, from the highest to the lowest, are connected as by a link or chain; and that the least confusion in one system, would be attended with the destruction of the whole; which he illustrates by the following sublime passage.

“ Let Earth unbalanc'd from her orbit fly,  
 “ Planets and stars run lawless through the sky;  
 “ Let ruling Angels from their spheres be  
     “ hurl'd,  
 “ Being on Being wreck'd, and world on world;  
 “ Heav'n's whole foundations to their centre  
     “ nod,  
 “ And Nature trembles to the throne of God.”

There is no reading these lines without being struck with a momentary apprehension. We feel the dreadful disorder here described, and old Chaos rushes to our view.

The second Epistle treats of the nature and state of man with respect to himself, as an individual.



vidual. The poet here recommends the study of mankind, and shews the imperfect state of the human understanding with regard to the knowledge of ourselves. He represents man as doubting and wavering between the objects of right and wrong.

“ With too much knowledge for the Sceptic  
“ side,

“ With too much weakness for the Stoic’s  
“ pride,

“ He hangs between ; in doubt to act, or rest ;

“ In doubt to deem himself a God, or Beast ;

“ In doubt his Mind or Body to prefer ;

“ Born but to die, and reas’ning but to err ;

“ Alike in ignorance, his reason such,

“ Whether he thinks too little, or too much ;

“ Chaos of Thought and Passion, all confus’d ;

“ Still by himself abus’d, or dis-abus’d ;

“ Created half to rise, and half to fall ;

“ Great Lord of all things, yet a prey to all ;

“ Sole judge of truth, in endless error hurl’d :

“ The glory, jest, and riddle of the world !”

Nothing can be more animated, more pointed, and at the same time more just, than this description of man’s imperfect state, with respect to the knowledge of himself, which is of all others the most difficult : For to whatever extent he may stretch his understanding in other sciences, yet in the knowledge of his own nature, he will necessarily be more limited, as the intervention of the passions will check and impede the operations of his reason.



There are, as the poet observes, two principles in human nature, *Self-love* and *Reason*: of which the distinct offices are explained.

Self-love is the spring of action; Reason the balance which governs it——

“ Most strength the moving principle requires :

“ Active its task, it prompts, impels, in-  
“ spires.

“ Sedate and quiet, the comparing lies,

“ Form’d but to check, delib’rate, and advise.

“ Self-love still stronger, as its objects nigh ;

“ Reason’s at distance, and in prospect lie :

“ That sees immediate good by present sense ;

“ Reason, the future and the consequence \*.”

The passions, our author observes, are but modes of self-love : and their influence and use in human life is admirably described in the following lines.

“ Passions, tho’ selfish, if their means be fair,

“ Lift under Reason, and deserve her care ;

“ Those, that imparted, court a nobler aim,

“ Exalt their kind, and take some Virtue’s  
“ name.

“ In lazy Apathy let Stoics boast

“ Their Virtue fix’d ; ’tis fix’d as in a frost ;

\* To the same effect Lord Bacon expresses himself. “ The affections,” says he, “ carry ever an appetite to good, as reason doth. The difference is, that the affection beholdeth merely the present, reason beholdeth the future and sum of time.”



“ Contracted all, retiring to the breast ;  
 “ But strength of mind is Exercise, not Rest :  
 “ The rising tempest puts in act the soul,  
 “ Parts it may ravage, but preserves the whole.  
 “ On life’s vast ocean diversely we sail,  
 “ Reason the card, but passion is the gale †;  
 “ Not God alone in the still calm we find,  
 “ He mounts the storm, and walks upon the  
 “ wind.”

Perhaps strength of reasoning and harmony of numbers were never more happily united than in the foregoing extract ; and the image, by which the truth of the argument is illustrated in the two concluding lines, is as sublime as poetry can express.

Nor are the succeeding lines less poetical or just, wherein our author remarks, that though all the passions, in their turn, influence the human mind, yet there is one *master passion*, which, in the end, over-powers and absorbs the rest.

“ Pleasures are ever in our hands or eyes ;  
 “ And when, in act, they cease, in prospect,  
 “ rise :  
 “ Present to grasp, and future still to find,  
 “ The whole employ of body and of mind.

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† “ The mind,” says Lord Bacon, “ would be temperate and stayed, if the affections, as winds, did not put it into tumult and perturbation.”



- " All spread their charms, but charm not all  
 " alike ;  
 " On diff'rent senses diff'rent objects strike ;  
 " Hence diff'rent Passions more or less inflame,  
 " As strong or weak, the organs of the frame ;  
 " And hence one *master passion* \* in the breast,  
 " Like Aaron's serpent, swallows up the rest."

These truths are so forcibly and beautifully conveyed, that at the same time we are convinced by the sentiments, we are charmed with the expressions. Nor is the poet less happy in explaining the growth of the ruling passion.

- " Nature its mother, Habit † is its nurse ;  
 " Wit, Spirit, Faculties, but make it worse ;  
 " Reason

\* The strength of the ruling passion, and the necessity of attending to it in our commerce with mankind, is remarked by Lord Bacon, who says, " It is not sufficient to inform ourselves in mens ends and natures of the variety of them only, but also of the *predominancy*, what humour reigneth most, and what end is principally sought."

I will add, that the reader will find the predominance of the ruling passion farther exemplified by Mr. POPE, in his first Ethic epistle, of which hereafter.

† Our author's strong sense of the prevalence of Habit is well described in one of his letters to Mr. Bethel, where he says——

- " *Habit* is the mistress of the world, and whatever is  
 " generally said, has more sway than *opinion*. Yours con-  
 " fines you to the wolds of Yorkshire, mine to the banks of  
 " the Thames : and yet I think I have less dependance on  
 " others, and others less on me, than most men I have ever  
 " known ;



“ Reason itself but gives it edge and pow’r ;  
 “ As Heav’n’s blest beam turns vinegar more  
 “ fow’r.”

But the poet rises with his subject, till he leads us into extacy. Speaking of the inefficacy of reason to controul the ruling passion, he says,

“ We, wretched subjects, tho’ to lawful sway,  
 “ In this weak queen, some fav’rite still obey :  
 “ Ah ! if she lend not arms, as well as rules,  
 “ What can she more than tell us we are  
 “ fools ?

“ Teach us to mourn our Nature, not to mend,  
 “ A sharp accuser, but a helpless friend !

“ Or from a judge turn pleader, to persuade

“ The choice we make, or justify it made ;

“ Proud of an easy conquest all along,

“ She but removes weak Passions for the  
 “ strong \* :

“ So, when small humours gather to a gout,

“ The doctor fancies he has driven them out.”

“ known ; so that I *should be* free. So should a female  
 “ friend of ours † ; but *habit* is her *Goddeſs*, I wish I could  
 “ not say worse, her *tyrant* : she not only *obeys*, but suffers  
 “ under her : and reason and friendship plead in vain. Out  
 “ of hell, and out of habit, there is no redemption.”

\* It is of special use in morality, as Lord Bacon observes, to set affection against affection, and endeavour to master one passion by another, as we hunt beast with beast, &c.

† Meaning Mrs. Blount.



There is something in these lines inexpressibly plaintive and affecting. They come home to every man's bosom: and while we admire them as beautiful, we sigh to own them just. Nevertheless, I will be free to remark, that their effect is in some measure weakened, by the levity of the illustration in the two last lines. It must be confessed that it is sprightly, but it draws the mind too suddenly from grave to gay, which cannot be endured without violence and disgust.

The poet observes, that though reason cannot overthrow the ruling passion, it is nevertheless her office to rectify it, and sometimes to engraft our ruling virtue upon it:

“ See anger, zeal and fortitude supply ;  
 “ Ev'n av'rice, prudence; sloth, philosophy.”

In the last place, he shews the use of the passions in alleviating the real miseries of life, by presenting us with some visionary happiness which deludes us through every age.

“ Mean-while Opinion gilds with varying rays  
 “ Those painted clouds that beautify our days ;  
 “ Each want of Happiness, by Hope supply'd,  
 “ And each vacuity of sense by Pride :  
 “ These build as fast as knowledge can destroy ;  
 “ In folly's cup still laughs the bubble, joy.”

With what apt and beautiful imagery has the poet here painted the sweet illusions of life ! The figure, in the two first lines especially, is happily



happily conceived, and so admirably sustained, that our eyes, for a moment, are dazzled with the deceitful splendor of a gaudy evanescent scene.

In the third epistle, the nature and state of man is considered with respect to society. Here the author, in a strain of harmonious and sublime poetry, shews the close connection between each being in the universe, all served, and serving—

- “ Has God, thou fool ! work’d solely for thy  
 “ good,  
 “ Thy joy, thy pastime, thy attire, thy food ?  
 “ Who for thy table feeds the wanton fawn,  
 “ For him as kindly spread the flow’ry lawn :  
 “ Is it for thee the lark ascends and sings ?  
 “ Joy tunes his voice, joy elevates his wings.  
 “ Is it for thee the linnet pours his throat ?  
 “ Loves of his own and raptures swell the note.  
 “ The bounding steed you pompously bestride,  
 “ Shares with his lord the pleasure and the  
 “ pride.  
 “ Is thine alone the feed that strews the plain ?  
 “ The birds of Heav’n shall vindicate their  
 “ grain.  
 “ Thine the full harvest of the golden year ?  
 “ Part pays, and justly, the deserving steer :  
 “ The hog, that plows not, nor obeys thy call,  
 “ Lives on the labours of this Lord of all.”

The author then shews the difference between the happiness of animal and of human life. The one consisting in the improvement of the mind,  
 is



is to be procured by reason only; the other, consisting in the gratification of sense, is best promoted by instinct, which, with regard to its regular and constant operation, has the advantage over reason——

“ And Reason raise o’er Instinct as you can,  
 “ In this ’tis God directs, in that ’tis Man.”

The instances by which the author exemplifies this divine direction, are happily selected, and expressed with great harmony and dignity.

“ Who taught the nations of the field and  
 “ wood  
 “ To shun their poison, and to chuse their food ?  
 “ Prescient, the tides or tempests to withstand,  
 “ Build on the wave, or arch beneath the  
 “ sand ?  
 “ Who made the spider parallels design,  
 “ Sure as *De-moivre*, without rule or line ?  
 “ Who bid the stork, Columbus-like, explore  
 “ Heav’ns not his own, and worlds unknown  
 “ before ?  
 “ Who calls the council, states the certain day,  
 “ Who forms the phalanx, and who points the  
 “ way \* ?”

The

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\* The poet probably took the hint of this beautiful passage from Lord Bacon’s *de augmentis scientiarum*.—“ Who  
 “ taught the raven in a drought to throw pebbles into an  
 “ hollow tree where she espied water, that the water might  
 “ rise so as she might come to it ? Who taught the bee to  
 “ sail through such a vast sea of air, and to find a way from  
 “ the



The poet, having described the power of instinct in promoting the happiness of the *Individual* and of the *Kind*, he proceeds to shew, that all these being parts of a whole, God——

“ ————— The Whole to bless,  
“ On mutual Wants built mutual Happiness.”

This leads him to illustrate the original of society, both *natural* and *civil*. In opposition to Hobbs, he represents the state of nature as a state of peace and innocence, of which he gives the following beautiful description.

“ Self-love and Social at her birth began,  
“ Union the bond of all things, and of Man.  
“ Pride then was not; nor Arts, that Pride to  
“ aid;  
“ Man walk’d with beast, joint-tenant of the  
“ shade;  
“ The same his table, and the same his bed;  
“ No murder cloath’d him, and no murder fed.  
“ In the same temple, the resounding wood,  
“ All vocal beings hymn’d an equal God:  
“ The shrine with gore unstain’d, with gold  
“ undrest,  
“ Unbrib’d, unbloody, stood the blameless  
“ priest:  
“ Heav’n’s attribute was Universal Care,  
“ And Man’s prerogative to rule, but spare.

“ the field in flower, a great way off to her hive? Who  
“ taught the Ant to bite every grain of corn that she burieth  
“ in her hill, lest it should take root and grow?”

“ Ah!



“ Ah ! how unlike the man of times to come !  
 “ Of half that live the butcher and the tomb ;  
 “ Who, foe to Nature, hears the gen’ral groan,  
 “ Murders their species, and betrays his own.  
 “ But just disease to luxury succeeds,  
 “ And ev’ry death its own avenger breeds ;  
 “ The Fury-passions from that blood began,  
 “ And turn’d on Man a fiercer savage, Man.”

What various beauties are comprized in these lines ! With what an amiable simplicity is man’s natural state described ! With what tender sympathy the author bewails the degeneracy which succeeded ! With what indignant rebuke he marks the bloody havock caused by luxury ! And with what physical propriety, he traces the rise of the furious passions from the indulgence of a sanguinary appetite !

The order of the subject next leads the poet to explain the origin of *civil* society. He describes man rising gradually from nature to art, and observes, that in such progress, it was the part of reason to copy from instinct, which he illustrates by a most excellent and sublime *protopoeia*.

“ Thus then to Man the voice of Nature spake-  
 “ ---Go, from the Creatures thy instructions  
     “ take :  
 “ Learn from the birds what food the thickets  
     “ yield ;  
 “ Learn from the beasts the physic of the field ;  
                                     “ Thy



" Thy arts of building from the bee receive ;  
 " Learn of the mole to plough, the worm to  
     " weave ;  
 " Learn of the little Nautilus to sail,  
 " Spread the thin oar, and catch the driving  
     " gale.  
 " *Here too all forms of social union find,*  
 " And hence let Reason, late, instruct Mankind.  
 " Here subterranean works and cities see ;  
 " There towns aerial on the waving tree.  
 " Learn each small People's genius, policies,  
 " The Ants' republic, and the realm of Bees ;  
 " How those in common all their wealth be-  
     " flow,  
 " And Anarchy without confusion know ;  
 " And these for ever, tho' a Monarch reign,  
 " Their sep'rate cells and properties maintain.  
 " Mark what unvary'd laws preserve each state,  
 " Laws wise as Nature, and as fix'd as Fate."

These philosophical illustrations are graced with all the ornaments of poetry : And while the reasoning mortifies our pride, the numbers flatter our taste.

The account which the poet gives of the origin of *Religion* is too excellent to be omitted. It is obvious that the religion of man, at his first entrance into civil society, must have been the same as in a state of nature. By looking up from fire to fire, he explored one great first Father, or else he gained the knowledge of God by tradition. The pure and simple ideas which

R

man



man then entertained of the attributes of the Deity are thus admirably described——

“ The Worker from the work distinct was  
“ known.

“ And simple Reason never fought but one :

“ Ere Wit oblique had broke that steady light,

“ Man, like his Maker, saw that all was right ;

“ To Virtue, in the paths of pleasure trod,

“ And own'd a Father when he own'd a God.”

The writer here, with great address, makes philosophy assistant to religion \*.

Nor does the poet display less merit in the contrast which follows, wherein he traces the corruption of civil society, and consequently of religion.

“ Force first made conquest, and that conquest,  
“ law ;

“ Till Superstition taught the Tyrant awe.

\* \* \* \* \*

“ Here fix'd the dreadful, there the blest  
“ abodes ;

“ Fear made her Devils, and weak Hope her  
“ Gods ;

“ Gods partial, changeful, passionate, unjust,

“ Whose attributes were Rage, Revenge, or  
“ Lust ;

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\* All good moral philosophy, says Lord Bacon, is but an handmaid to religion.



“ Such as the souls of cowards might conceive,  
“ And, form’d like tyrants, tyrants would  
“ believe.

“ Zeal then, not charity, became the guide ;  
“ And hell was built on spite, and heav’n on  
“ pride.

“ Then sacred seem’d th’ ethereal vault no  
“ more ;

“ Altars grew marble then, and reek’d with  
“ gore :

“ Then first the Flamen tasted living food ;

“ Next his grim Idol smear’d with human  
“ blood ;

“ With heav’n’s own thunders shook the world  
“ below,

“ And play'd the God an engine on his foe.”

The fatal effects of tyranny and superstition, are here described in the most bold and glowing colours. The opposition between zeal and charity is happily introduced. The eleventh line is awfully sublime, and pregnant with more meaning than it expresses.

In the deduction which the author draws from hence, he shews with great judgment and address, that the same principle which gave birth to this corruption, did at the same time pave the way for a reformation.

“ So drives Self-love, thro’ juſt and thro’ un-  
 “ juſt,

“ To one man’s pow’r, ambition, lucre, lust:



“ The same Self-love, *in all*, becomes the cause  
 “ Of what restrains him; Government and  
 “ Laws.”

This leads the poet to illustrate the true principles of policy and religion——

“ Such is the World’s great Harmony, \* that  
 “ springs  
 “ From Order, Union, full Consent of things,  
 “ Where small and great, where weak and  
 “ mighty, made  
 “ To serve, not suffer, strengthen, not in-  
 “ vade;  
 “ More pow’rful each as needful to the rest,  
 “ And, in proportion as it blesses, blest;  
 “ Draw to one point, and to one centre bring  
 “ Beast, Man, or Angel, Servant, Lord or  
 “ King.”

\* Mr. Croufaz, mistaking the harmony which the poet here speaks of, accused him of espousing the *pre-established* harmony of the celebrated Leibnitz. The learned commentator, however, has clearly vindicated him from any intention of espousing that impious whimsy. The reader, nevertheless, will doubtless be pleased to hear what our author himself says on this occasion, in a letter addressed to his friend and commentator.

“ I will not give you the unnecessary trouble of adding  
 “ here to the defence you have made of me, (though much  
 “ might be said on the article of the passions in the second  
 “ book;) only it cannot be unpleasant to you to know, that  
 “ I never in my life read a line of Leibnitz, nor understood  
 “ there was such a term as *pre-established harmony*, till I  
 “ found it in M<sup>rs</sup>. Croufaz’s book.”

Nothing



Nothing can be more amiable, just, wise and benevolent, than the foregoing system: and as such a system is always in danger from the refinements of too curious speculation, the poet very justly reprehends this propensity in the following lines.

- “ For Forms of Government let fools contest ;
- “ Whate’er is best administer’d, is best :
- “ For Modes of Faith let graceless zealots fight ;
- “ His can’t be wrong whose life is in the right.”

These lines, more especially the first two, have been frequently misinterpreted; and it has been supposed that the author meant to insinuate that no one *form* of government was, in itself, better than another: An absurdity from which he is clearly vindicated by the learned editor of his works, as well as by an apology found under his own hand, which the editor has subjoined to the note on these lines. Indeed it is strange to imagine that one of Mr. POPE’s correct *judgment* should ever entertain such a solecism.

That administration is best, which is conducted according to the true principles of the established constitution. Consequently if those principles are bad, the more perfect the administration is, the more destructive it will prove to the governed. Mr. POPE, in his apology above alluded to, admits, that the *best* sort of government, when the form of it is preserved, and the administration corrupt, is most dangerous: so, on the other hand, it is



equally true, that the *worst* kind of government, when the form of it is preserved, and the administration perfect, is the most pernicious.

However, I am free to confess, that though, taking the whole context together, the *meaning* of these lines may be well ascertained, yet the *expression* is, to say no more, obscure; and does by no means convey that meaning with our author's usual perspicuity. For, notwithstanding his apology, and the very ingenious exposition of his commentator, the expression is too general to admit of such limitations as the true construction requires.

The poet, having explained the true principles of policy and religion, and shewn, that however the world may disagree about religious and political principles, yet charity is, nevertheless, the concern of all mankind, he concludes this epistle with the following incomparable lines.

“ Man, like the gen’rous vine, supported lives;  
 “ The strength he gains is from th’ embrace  
     “ he gives.  
 “ On their own Axis as the Planets run,  
 “ Yet make at once their circle round the Sun;  
 “ So two *consistent* motions act the Soul;  
 “ And one regards itself, and one the Whole\*.”

The

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\* The same sentiment we find in substance, thus expressed by Lord Bacon—“ There is formed in every thing a double nature of good: the one, as every thing is a total or substance  
 “ stance



The poet has here, with peculiar skill and felicity, contrived, that the same ornaments which embellish his verse, should strengthen his argument. These beautiful and sublime similes, afford the most apt and powerful illustration of the truth of that proposition, which he would imprint on the reader's mind, namely, that Self-love and Social are the same.

Having thus displayed the nature of man in his various relations, in his fourth and last Epistle, he considers his nature and state with respect to happiness, the end which every human being pursues.

This epistle opens with an invocation to happiness; and the reader will find a summary of false and true felicity in the following lines: wherein the poet, with his usual address, has contrived to illustrate the proposition he would prove, by the most beautiful images, conveyed in the most harmonious versification.

“ Oh Happiness! our being's end and aim!

“ Good, Pleasure, Ease, Content! whate'er thy  
“ name:

“ That something still which prompts th' eter-  
“ nal sigh,

“ For which we bear to live, or dare to die,

“ stance in itself; the other, as it is a part or member of a  
“ great body; whereof the latter is in degree the greater  
“ and the worthier, because it tendeth to the conservation  
“ of a more general form.”



- " Which still so near us, yet beyond us lies,  
 " O'erlook'd, seen double, by the fool, and  
   " wife.  
 " Plant of celestial seed ! if dropt below,  
 " Say in what mortal foil though deign't to  
   " grow ?  
 " Fair op'ning to some Court's propitious shine,  
 " Or deep with di'monds in the flaming mine ?  
 " Twin'd with the wreaths Parnassian laurels  
   " yield,  
 " Or reap'd in iron harvests of the field ?  
 " Where grows ?--where grows it not ? If vain  
   " our toil,  
 " We ought to blame the culture, not the  
   " foil :  
 " Fix'd to no spot is Happiness sincere,  
 " 'Tis no where to be found, or ev'ry where."

The poet having farther expos'd and confuted the idle notions concerning happiness, which were propagated by the antient philosophers ; of whom some plac'd it in action, some in ease \*, &c. he proceeds more particularly to explain in what it truly consists.

- " Take Nature's path, and mad Opinion's leave,  
 " All states can reach it, and all heads conceive ;

\* Mr. POPE, in one of his letters to Mr. Allen, has, in few words, express'd his idea of Happiness—" To be at ease," says he, " is the greatest of happiness (at ease, I mean, both of mind and body) but to be *idle* is the greatest of unhappiness, both to the one and the other."



" Obvious her goods, in no extreme they dwell;  
 " There needs but thinking right, and mean-  
   " ing well;  
 " And mourn our various portions as we  
   " please,  
 " Equal is CommonSense, and Common Ease."

It will probably occur to the learned reader, that the poet has here adopted the sentiments of the Grecian sage, who said—" That if we  
 " live according to Nature, we shall never be  
 " poor; and if we live according to Opinion, we  
 " shall never be rich."

Our poet then goes on to shew in what true happiness consists; which he thus forcibly explains.

" Know, all the good that individuals find,  
 " Or God and Nature meant to mere mankind,  
 " Reason's whole pleasure, all the joys of sense,  
 " Lie in three words, Health, Peace, and Com-  
   " petence.  
 " But Health consists with Temperance alone;  
 " And Peace, oh Virtue! Peace is all thy  
   " own."

The strong and affecting manner in which these sentiments are expressed, naturally disposes a mind of any sensibility, to that serene and placid state which is attendant on virtue. The invocation, and emphatic repetition in the last line, have a peculiar energy and pathos.



To those who impiously arraign providence for not preventing the evils which befall the good and just in this world ; our author answers in the following lines.

“ Shall burning Etna, if a sage requires,  
 “ Forget to thunder, and recall her fires ?  
 “ On air or sea new motions be imprest,  
 “ Oh blameless Bethel \* ! to relieve thy breast ?  
 “ When the loose mountain trembles from on  
     “ high,  
 “ Shall gravitation cease, if you go by ?  
 “ Or some old temple, nodding to its fall,  
 “ For Chartres’ head reserve the hanging  
     “ wall ? ”

This argument, by which the poet shews that the evils complained of, could not be prevented, without continually reversing the established laws of nature, is finely illustrated.

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\* In a letter which our author, soon after the death of his mother, wrote to Mr. Bethel, he seems to hint at this passage :

“ I have now but too much melancholy leisure, and no  
 “ other care but to finish my Essay on Man. There will  
 “ be in it but one line that will offend you (I fear) and yet  
 “ I will not alter it or omit it, unless you come to town and  
 “ prevent me before I print it, which will be in a fortnight  
 “ in all probability. In plain truth, I will not deny myself  
 “ the greatest pleasure I am capable of receiving, because  
 “ another may have the modesty not to share it. It is all a  
 “ poor poet can do, to bear testimony to the virtue he can-  
 “ not reach : besides that, in this age, I see too few good  
 “ examples, not to lay hold on any I can find.”

The



The poet next turns toward another sort of cavillers, who murmur at the dispensations of providence, because the *just* are not better rewarded. To these he answers, that God only can tell who those *just* are; and with the most exquisite feeling, he again points out the inestimable reward of Virtue,

“ What nothing earthly gives, or can destroy,  
 “ The soul’s calm sun-shine, and the heart-felt  
     “ joy,  
 “ Is Virtue’s prize.”——

He then proceeds to shew, that without virtue, no externals whatever can make men happy; which he instances in riches, honours, nobility, greatness, and fame.

The false pretensions of greatness are admirably exposed in the characters of the hero and politician.

“ Look next on Greatness; say where Greatness  
     “ lies?  
 “ Where, but among the Heroes and the Wise?  
 “ Heroes are much the same, the point’s  
     “ agreed,  
 “ From Macedonia’s madman to the Swede;  
 “ The whole strange purpose of their lives, to  
     “ find  
 “ Or make, an enemy of all mankind \*!  
   “ No

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\* These two lines which immediately follow——

“ Not one looks backward, onward still he goes,  
 “ Yet ne’er looks forward further than his nose;”



\* \* \* \* \*

" No less alike the Politic and Wife ;  
 " All fly flow things, with circumspective eyes :  
 " Men in their loose unguarded hours they  
     " take,  
 " Not that themselves are wise, but others  
     " weak.  
 " But grant that those can conquer, these can  
     " cheat ;  
 " 'Tis phrase absurd, to call a Villain Great :  
 " Who wickedly is wise, or madly brave,  
 " Is but the more a fool, the more a knave.  
 " Who noble ends by noble means obtains,  
 " Or failing, smiles in exile or in chains,  
 " Like good Aurelius let him reign, or bleed  
 " Like Socrates, that man is great indeed."

It is observable, that the writer on no occasion shews a more indignant spirit, than where he points his satire against Machiavelian policy and circumventing craft. I make this remark with the greater pleasure, as it goes in commendation of the *man*, and as society is more interested to have a just account of his moral character, than of his literary capacity.

The following estimate of fame, is extremely just and beautiful.

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are by no means suitable to the dignity of the subject. There is something so familiar, nay even vulgar in them, as renders them not only very unequal to the rest, but very unworthy of our author.

" What's



“ What’s Fame? a fancy’d life in others  
 “ breath,  
 “ A thing beyond us, ev’n before our death. ”

\* \* \* \* \*

“ All that we feel of it begins and ends  
 “ In the small circle of our foes and friends ;  
 “ To all beside, as much an empty shade  
 “ An Eugene living, as a Caesar dead :

\* \* \* \* \*

“ A Wit’s a feather, and a Chief a rod ;  
 “ An honest Man’s the noblest work of God \*.”

\* A great lawyer, who had a profligate son, bequeathed him a trifling legacy, together with this verse of Mr. POPE’s, desiring him to reflect on it often.

Nevertheless, this sentiment has been censured by a very ingenious writer, who observes, that “ if honesty had been POPE’s “ noblest quality, he would never have gained public admiration.” But the critic seems to give this sentiment too confined a construction. The poet here does not use the word *honest* in its popular sense, but in its philosophical signification : in which the idea of an honest man includes a certain liberality and elevation of mind, which is not to be attained without the concurrence of many noble qualities. Those talents which we exercise in the eye of the public are, it is true, more likely to draw admiration ; but they are not therefore more noble. The man who can suffer with fortitude, and act with dignity, is a much more noble object, than he who can express the sublimest ideas. Besides, it is material to add, that the poet is here decrying that *public admiration*, which the critic, by this strange argument, not only supposes was his general aim, but was his particular purpose in this place to recommend.

Having



Having expos'd this fantastic fame, he shews the foundation of real fame.

- " All Fame is foreign, but of true desert ;  
 " Plays round the head, but comes not to the  
   " hearts  
 " One self-approving hour whole years out-  
   " weighs  
 " Of stupid starers, and of loud huzzas ;  
 " And more true joy Marcellus exil'd feels,  
 " Than Caesar with a senate at his heels."

Nothing can be more just than these sentiments, or more beautifully expressed. The image of fantastic Fame playing round the head without reaching the heart, is happily conceived ; it is apt and striking. A man of sound judgment and nice feelings must be frequently offended by the flutter of mistaken applause, which buzzes about his head, but makes no impression on his heart.

The poet proceeds to shew, that not only external goods are incapable of procuring happiness, but that all internal have not that efficacy, which he instances in the advantage of superior parts.

- " In Parts superior what advantage lies ?  
 " Tell (for You can) what is it to be wise ?  
 " 'Tis but to know how little can be known ;  
 " To see all others faults, and feel our own :  
 " Condemn'd in business or in arts to drudge,  
 " Without a second, or without a judge :  
                                   " Truths



- “ Truths would you teach, or save a sinking  
 “ land?  
 “ All fear, none aid you, and few understand.  
 “ Painful preheminance ! yourself to view  
 “ Above life’s weakness, and its comforts  
 “ too.”

How feelingly does the poet describe the unenviable situation of those who possess excelling talents ! And yet he has only sketched the outlines : had he filled the canvas, what a picture of solitary dejection \* would a pencil like his have exhibited !

‘The man of superior parts can but seldom relish the true delights of society, because he can find but few with whom he can assimilate. And alas ! even among those few, he too often finds a rival, where he expected a companion.

As his merit excites jealousy in his equals, so it begets distrust in those of inferior talents. Such, for want of the same quickness of apprehension and depth of penetration, being unable to discern the true principles which direct him, are too apt to suspect him of design, even when he is most ingenuous ; and he has sometimes the mortification of being prevented from conferring a benefit, by the unjust suspicion of the very man, whom he means to serve. How deplorable then

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\* The reader will observe that we are here speaking of *Knowledge*, independant of *Virtue*.



must his condition be, whose superior parts exclude him from the affection of his equals, and the confidence of his inferiors !

As no qualities, therefore, either external or internal, can, as our author has shewn, constitute felicity, independant of virtue, he proceeds to prove how far happiness may be conferred and enlarged by that alone.

“ Know then this truth (enough for Man to  
“ know)

“ Virtue alone is Happiness below.”\*

“ The only point where human bliss stands  
“ still,

“ And tastes the good without the fall to ill ;

“ Where only Merit constant pay receives,

“ Is blest in what it takes, and what it gives ;

“ The joy unequal’d, if its end it gain,

“ And if it lose, attended with no pain :

“ Without satiety, tho’ e’er so blest’d,

“ And but more relish’d as the more distress’d :

“ The broadest mirth unfeeling Folly wears,

“ Less pleasing far than Virtue’s very tears :

“ Good, from each object, from each place

“ acquir’d,

“ For ever exercis’d, yet never tir’d ;

\* In one of his letters to Mr. Bethel he jocosely says—“ I am writing an epistle on the true happiness of man, in which I shall prove the best man the happiest ; and consequently you should pull off your hat to me, for painting you as the happiest man in the universe.”



“ Never elated, while one man’s oppress’d ;  
 “ Never dejected, while another’s blest’d ;  
 “ And where no wants, no wishes can remain,  
 “ Since but to wish more Virtue, is to gain.”

There is something in these lines so soothing and persuasive, that it is impossible to read them without sympathetic emotions, and wishing to exercise that benevolence which is here so beautifully described.

Nor will a reader of sensibility be less delighted with the following lines, which mark the difference between the progress of human and divine benevolence.

“ God loves from Whole to Parts : But human  
 “ soul  
 “ Must rise from Individual to the Whole \*.  
 “ Self-love but serves the virtuous mind to  
 “ wake,  
 “ As the small pebble stirs the peaceful lake ;  
 “ The centre mov’d, a circle straight succeeds,  
 “ Another still, and still another spreads ;  
 “ Friend, parent, neighbour, first it will embrace ;  
 “ His country next ; and next all human race † ;  
 “ Wide

---

\* In one of our author’s letters to Mr. Bethel, he says—

“ I much better understand the beauties of friendship and  
 “ the merits of virtue in private life, than those of public ;  
 “ and should never love my country, if I did not love the  
 “ best men in it.”

† To the same effect are his private sentiments to his particular friend Mr. Allen—



“ Wide and more wide, th’ o’erflowings of  
 “ the mind  
 “ Take ev’ry creature in, of ev’ry kind;  
 “ Earth smiles around, with boundless bounty  
 “ blest,  
 “ And Heav’n beholds its image in his breast.”

Here we have another instance of the poet’s happy choice of poetical embellishments. The simile ‡ he has employed, affords the clearest illustration of the expanding nature of benevolence, and establishes the truth of his reasoning, at the same time that it gives beauty to the poem.

But as genius, like fame, gathers strength in its course, so in the conclusion of the Essay, our poet seems to have collected all his powers, to complete the following noble apostrophe——

“ Come then, my Friend! my Genius! come  
 “ along;  
 “ Oh master of the poet, and the song!

“ I thank you for the account of your safe arrival at home;  
 “ there is the end of all your wishes: than which, there can  
 “ be no greater happiness on this side of the grave. Un-  
 “ happy is the man who must ramble in search of it! I can  
 “ pray for no greater blessing for a friend, than that he may  
 “ love his own home, his own family, and next his neigh-  
 “ bour; yet be resigned to leave his present residence, when-  
 “ ever Providence ordains: and love his own family, yet  
 “ consider the *whole world* as his relations, though more  
 “ distant.”

‡ The reader, who recollects the simile in Addison’s Cato, cannot fail being smitten with the resemblance.

“ And



" And while the Muse now stoops, or now  
 " ascends,  
 " To Man's low passions, or their glorious ends,  
 " Teach me, like thee, in various nature wise,  
 " To fall with dignity, with temper rise;  
 " Form'd by thy converse, happily to steer  
 " From grave to gay, from lively to severe;  
 " Correct with spirit, eloquent with ease,  
 " Intent to reason, or polite to please.  
 " Oh! while along the stream of Time thy  
 " name  
 " Expanded flies, and gathers all its fame;  
 " Say, shall my little bark attendant sail,  
 " Pursue the triumph, and partake the gale?  
 " When statesmen, heroes, kings, in dust repose,  
 " Whose sons shall blush their fathers were  
 " thy foes,  
 " Shall then this verse to future age pretend  
 " Thou wert my GUIDE, PHILOSOPHER and  
 " FRIEND?  
 " That urg'd by thee, I turn'd the tuneful art  
 " From sounds to things, from fancy to the  
 " heart;  
 " For Wit's false mirror held up Nature's  
 " light,  
 " Shew'd erring Pride, WHATEVER IS, IS  
 " RIGHT;  
 " That REASON, PASSION, answer one great  
 " aim;  
 " That true SELF-LOVE and SOCIAL are  
 " the same;  
 " That VIRTUE only makes our Bliss below;  
 " And all our Knowledge is, OURSELVES TO  
 " KNOW."



These excellent lines, as the learned commentator accurately observes, will furnish a critic with examples of each of those five species of elocution, from which, as from its sources, Longinus deduceth the sublime. Namely, a grandeur and sublimity of conception; a pathetic enthusiasm; an elegant formation and ordonnance of figures; a splendid diction; and a weight and dignity in the composition. In short, had Mr. POPE given no other specimen of his poetical talents, we might from these lines only, safely pronounce him a poet.

Upon the whole, though in this ethical system, it must be confessed, that the great outlines are taken from the most excellent of the antient and modern writers; yet let it be observed, that had he not copied those outlines, he must have sketch'd out a Chimera: And this is the only species of poetical INVENTION, in which our poet was wanting. For in all invention (to use this misapplied term) within the verge of nature, his poetry in every line abounds. If justly drawing, artfully grouping, and strongly expressing, in a well chosen subject, ever gave poet or painter the pretence to *invention*, it might be claimed by our author.

Whenever he borrows a thought, he improves it to that degree that it becomes original. There is so much precision and perspicuity, so much of the *lucidus ordo*, in his chain of reasoning, the images by which he illustrates his arguments are so appropriated and striking, and his numbers



bers so harmonious ; that every sentiment wears an air of novelty, and displays the excellence of human wit, as himself justly defines it.

“ True Wit is Nature to advantage drest ;  
 “ What oft was thought, but ne’er so well  
 “ exprest.”

In short, after having demolished the monstrous superstructures of the antients, he has employed the old materials which composed them, in erecting a regular and beautiful fabric, in which all the parts correspond with such exact symmetry, and the whole bespeaks such an air of noble simplicity, as proves it to be the *invention* of a correct and sublime genius \*.

This

\* It may be curious to remark, that when this poem was first published, our author carefully concealed its being his production, and it was ascribed to Dr. Young, to Dr. Defaguliers, to Lord Bolingbroke, to Lord Paget, and several others. While his acquaintance read it as the work of an unknown author, they fairly owned they did not understand it.

Among others, a certain little poet, speaking, in a visit he paid to Mr. POPE, of the *Essay on Man*, soon after its appearance, observed with an air of critical self-sufficiency, that the poetry was but indifferent, the philosophy intolerable, and the whole devoid of connection. If I thought, added he, that you had not seen it, I would have brought it with me. Mr. POPE, to mortify the coxcomb, frankly told him that he had seen it before it went to the press ; for that it was his own performance, and had been the work of some years. The confusion of the visitor, at this declaration, may be easier conceived than expressed.

When the reputation of the poem however became secured, by the knowledge of the writer, it soon grew so clear and in-



This poem soon became so universally celebrated, that it was translated into French by Monsieur Refnel †, and Monsieur Croufaz wrote a formal critique upon it. The errors and absurdities of several of his remarks, were owing to the blunders and inaccuracies of his countryman's translation, which misled him in many instances; nevertheless, some of his false criticisms are owing to his own misapprehensions. But this idle critique is so fully answered and refuted by the learned comment subjoined to this piece, that it is needless to say more of it ‡.

It

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telligible, that on the appearance of the comment upon it, they told him they wondered the editor should think a large and minute interpretation necessary.

† It was likewise translated into Latin verse by Dr. Kirkpatrick.

‡ Our author was so sensible of the service done to his work by this comment, that he did not fail to make grateful acknowledgements of it in the following letter, addressed to his friend and commentator, dated February 2, 1738, wherein, with conscious dignity, he expresses his indifference with regard to unjust censure.

“ I cannot forbear to return you my thanks for your animadversion on Mr. Croufaz: though I doubt not it was less a regard to me, than to candor and truth, which made you take this pains to answer so mistaken a man. I fear, indeed, he did not attack me on quite so good a principle: and whenever I see such a vein of uncharitableness and vanity in any work, whether it concerns me or another, I am always ready to thank God to find it accompanied with as much weakness. But this is what I should never  
“ have



It remains to observe, that some passages in the *Essay on Man*, having been unjustly suspected of a tendency toward fate and naturalism, the author composed a prayer as the sum of all; which is printed under the title of the UNIVERSAL PRAYER, and was intended to shew that his system was founded in *free will*, and terminated in piety——and surely devotion never breathed a more pure, simple, and at the same time, a more exalted strain, than in the following inimitable stanzas.

“Thou Great First Cause, least understood :

“Who all my Sense confin’d

“To know but this, that Thou art good,

“And that myself am blind ; (¹)

“Yet

“have expos’d myself, and therefore I am the more oblig’d  
“to you for doing it.”

This, and the foregoing letters, wherein our poet pays grateful acknowledgements to his learned friend and commentator, naturally leads us to reflect on the different nature of the obligations which he owed to this celebrated personage, and to the deceased Lord Bolingbroke.

The latter *would have* given a bias to this admirable essay, which would have been disgraceful to our bard’s understanding, dishonourable to his virtue, and injurious to society : the former, on the other hand, *did* give a bias to it, which will reflect immortal honour on the poet’s sense, do everlasting credit to his virtue, and be for ever serviceable to mankind. Now let the world determine, which of the two deserves the incomparable praise of being——

The Poet’s Guide, *Philosopher*, and FRIEND.

(¹) In the first epistle, after having vindicated the ways of God, against those who murmur at the imperfections



“ Yet gave me, in this dark estate,  
 “ To see the Good from Ill ;  
 “ And binding Nature fast in Fate,  
 “ Left *free* the Human Will. <sup>(b)</sup>

“ What *Conscience* dictates to be done,  
 “ Or warns me not to do,  
 “ This, teach me more than Hell to shun,  
 “ That, more than Heav’n pursue.

“ Yet not to Earth’s contracted Span  
 “ Thy Goodness let me bound,  
 “ Or think Thee Lord alone of Man, <sup>(c)</sup>  
 “ When thousand Worlds are round :

“ Let

of human nature; he concludes to the same effect as above.

“ Cease then, nor Order Imperfection name :  
 “ Our proper bliss depends on what we blame.  
 “ *Know thy own point* : this kind, this due degree  
 “ Of *blindness*, weakness, Heav’n bestows on thee.”

(b) Our author, in the second epistle, has proved this *freedom* of man’s will.—He has shewn that virtue and vice are blended in our nature, like light and shade ; and that though it is often difficult to distinguish genuine virtue from the spurious, yet there is an unerring criterion by which we may discern the difference.——

“ This light and darkness in our chaos join’d,  
 “ What shall divide ? The God within the mind——

That is, CONSCIENCE.—He hath likewise shewn that man hath it in his power to direct his passions to good or bad ends ;

“ REASON the byas, turns to good from ill.”

(c) The folly and impiety of thus limiting the divine goodness, is strongly exposed in the third epistle——

“ One



“ Let not this weak, unknowing hand  
 “ Prefume thy Bolts to throw,  
 “ And deal Damnation round the land,  
 “ On each I judge thy Foe. (<sup>d</sup>)

“ If I am right, thy Grace (<sup>e</sup>) impart,  
 “ Still in the right to stay;  
 “ If I am wrong, oh teach my heart  
 “ To find that better way.

“ Save

“ One all-extending, all-preserving soul,  
 “ Connects each being, &c.——

Again——

“ Has God, thou fool, work’d solely for thy good,  
 “ Thy joy, thy pastime, thy attire, thy food?”

(<sup>d</sup>) The writer, in the third epistle, after tracing the corruption of religion, and the origin of superstition, inveighs with great vehemence against the corrupt and vengeful spirit, which——

“ With Heav’n’s own thunder shook the world below,  
 “ And play’d the God an engine on his foe.”

(<sup>e</sup>) His learned friend and annotator on this passage has acutely remarked, that as the *imparting of grace*, on the Christian system, is a stronger exertion of divine power, than the natural illumination of the heart; one would expect that *right* and *wrong* should change places; more aid being required to *restore* men to right, than to keep them in it. But as it was the poet’s purpose to insinuate that revelation was the right, nothing could better express his purpose, than making the *right* secured by the guards of Grace.

I will add, that one principal design of the Essay on Man is to shew, that *reason*, aided by *natural religion*, can at most  
 but



“ Save me alike from foolish Pride,  
 “ Or impious Discontent,  
 “ At aught thy Wisdom has denied,  
 “ Or aught thy Goodness lent. (f)

“ Teach me to feel another’s Woe,  
 “ To hide the Fault I see;  
 “ That Mercy I to others show,  
 “ That Mercy show to me. (g)

but rectify our passions ; reason is a *guard*, but no *guide* : and our poet evidently points out the *guide*, which is REVELATION, the goal to which hope leads the good man.

“ For him alone Hope leads from goal to goal,  
 “ And opens still, and opens on his soul ;  
 “ Till lengthen’d on to FAITH, and unconfin’d,  
 “ It pours the bliss that fills up all the mind.”

(f) This foolish Pride is finely ridiculed in several parts of the Essay, particularly in the following couplet :

“ Ask for what end the heav’nly bodies shine,  
 “ Earth for whose use ? Pride answers,—’Tis for mine.”

The impious and ridiculous discontent of mankind, is likewise admirably exposed in the following lines, among others in this Essay.

“ What would this man ? Now upward will he soar,  
 “ And, little less than Angel, would be more ;  
 “ Now looking downward, just as griev’d appears,  
 “ To want the strength of bulls, the fur of bears.”

(g) These benevolent sentiments are diffused throughout the whole Essay ; and are in truth summed up in the following couplet :

“ Happier as kinder, in whate’er degree,  
 “ And height of Bliss is height of Charity.”



Upon the whole, this Prayer may be considered as an epitome of, or rather as a short comment on, his *Essay on Man*; and it is impossible for the most hardened infidel to read these stanzas without being impressed with a serious sense of religious truths, and of religious duties. <sup>(h)</sup>

To give the reader a just idea of our author's attention to method in his moral system, it is proper to remark, that the *Essay on Man* was intended to have been comprised in four books, as we are assured by the editor.

The first the author has given us, under that title, in the four epistles which have been the subject of the foregoing critical observations.

The second, was to have consisted of the same number, and to have treated, 1. Of the extent and limits of human reason. 2. Of those arts and sciences, and the parts of them, which are useful, and therefore attainable: together with those which are useless, and therefore unattainable. 3. Of the nature, ends, use and application of the different capacities of men. 4. Of the use of learning; of the science of the world; and of wit; concluding with a satire against the misapplication of them, illustrated by pictures, characters, and examples.

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<sup>(h)</sup> This prayer was translated into French by one Mons. Le Franck, a bigotted catholic: who afterward coming to reflect that it contained the strongest censure of superstition and persecution; thought proper to apologize for his translation.



The third book regarded civil regimen or the science of politics, in which the several forms of a republic were to have been examined and explained; together with the several modes of religious worship, so far as they affect society; between which the author always supposed there was the closest connection and most intimate relation: So that this part would have treated of civil and religious society in their full extent.

The fourth and last book, concerned private ethics, or practical morality; considered in all the circumstances, orders, professions, and stations of human life.

The scheme of all this had been maturely digested and communicated to Lord Bolingbroke, Dr. Swift, and one or two more, and was intended for the only work of his riper years; but was, partly through ill health, partly through discouragements, from the depravity of the times, and partly on prudential and other considerations, interrupted, postponed, and at last in a manner laid aside.

But as this was, as we are told, our author's favourite work, which more exactly reflected the image of his own strong capacious mind, and as we can have but a very imperfect idea of it from the *disiecta membra poetæ* which now remain, it will not be uninteresting to enter somewhat more particularly into the scope and design of these projected books.



The first, as it treats of man in the abstract, and considers him in general, under all his relations, becomes the foundation, and furnishes the subjects, of the three following: so that,

The second book was to take up again the first and second epistles of the first book; and to treat of man in his intellectual capacity at large, as explained above. Of this, only a small part of the conclusion (which, as has been said, was to have contained a satire against the misapplication of wit and learning) may be found in the fourth book of the *Dunciad*, and occasionally in the other three; of which an account is hereafter given.

The third book, in like manner, was to reassume the subject of the third epistle of the first, which treats of man in his social, political, and religious capacity. But this part the poet afterwards conceived might be better executed in an EPIC POEM; as the action would make it more animated, and the fable less invidious; in which all the great principles of true and false governments and religions, should be chiefly delivered in feigned examples. The plan of this poem, which was to have been intitled Brutus, will be explained hereafter.

The fourth and last book, was to pursue the subject of the fourth epistle of the first, and to treat of ethics, or practical morality, and would have consisted of many members; of which the four Moral Essays in the third volume, which is now under consideration, are detached portions:



tions: the two first, on the characters of *men* and *women*, being the introductory part of this book, which was to have included the whole.

For the sake of connection therefore, it will in the next place be proper to give some account of these four Moral Essays, which conclude the third volume of his works.

In the first, on the *Characters of Men*, our author takes notice of the difficulties in coming at the knowledge and true characters of men, arising from the diversity of their character, which he thus happily illustrates.

“ There’s some Peculiar in each leaf and grain,  
 “ Some unmark’d fibre, or some varying vein :  
 “ Shall only Man be taken in the gross ?  
 “ Grant but as many sorts of Mind as Moss.”

After enumerating other causes which render this research so difficult, he mentions the dissimulation and caprice of mankind, under the following beautiful and striking figures.

“ Our depths who fathoms, or our shallows  
 “ finds,  
 “ Quick whirls, and shifting eddies, of our  
 “ minds ?  
 “ On human Actions reason tho’ you can,  
 “ It may be Reason, but it is not Man :  
 “ His Principle of action once explore,  
 “ That instant ’tis his Principle no more.  
 “ Like



“ Like following life thro’ creatures you dis-  
 “ fect,  
 “ You lose it in the moment you detect.”

How bold, and at the same time how just, is this simile, whereby the poet illustrates the sudden change of the principle of action in man, which, among other causes, occasions the difficulty of determining his character.

This difficulty however, our author proceeds to observe, is not altogether owing to the obscurity of the object under contemplation, but in part arises from the defects of the observer, which is thus finely illustrated.

“ Yet more; the diff’rence is as great between  
 “ The optics seeing, as the objects seen.  
 “ All Manners take a tincture from our own;  
 “ Or come discolour’d through our Passions  
 “ shown.  
 “ Or Fancy’s beam enlarges, multiplies,  
 “ Contracts, inverts, and gives ten thousand  
 “ dyes.”

These images are beautifully appropriated, and are remarkably chaste and correct. With the same elegance and propriety, our author pursues the enumeration of the difficulties which obstruct our inquiry into the characters of men.

“ Nor will Life’s stream for Observation stay,  
 “ It hurries all too fast to mark their way:  
 “ In



- “ In vain fedate reflections we would make,  
 “ When half our knowledge we must snatch,  
     “ not take.  
 “ Oft, in the Passions’ wild rotation tost,  
 “ Our spring of action to ourselves is lost :  
 “ Tir’d, not determin’d, to the last we yield,  
 “ And what comes then is master of the field.  
 “ As the last image of that troubled heap,  
 “ When Sense subsides, and Fancy sports in  
     “ sleep,  
 “ (Tho’ past the recollection of the thought)  
 “ Becomes the stuff of which our dream is  
     “ wrought.”

This notion of the cause of dreams, whether physically true or not, is happily applied to explain why we are often at a loss to account for the motives which impell us to action.

Our author proceeds, in the next place, to detect the erroneous means by which we endeavour to judge of human characters, and shews first that we cannot determine the motive from the action, as different actions proceed from the same motive.

- “ Behold ! if Fortune or a Mistress frowns,  
 “ Some plunge in bus’ness, others shave their  
     “ crowns :  
 “ To ease the Soul of one oppressive weight,  
 “ This quits an Empire, that embroils a State :  
 “ The same adult complexion has impell’d  
 “ Charles to the Convent, Philip to the Field.”



It is observable, that though the versification in these lines is smooth and poetical, yet there is not a single word which admits of inversion or transposition. They would preserve the same order, were they turned into prose; and though you may destroy the rhyme, you cannot break the numbers and measure. Perhaps this is the best proof of genuine poetry, which is not tortured into verse by unnatural inversions and transpositions; which always, in some degree, are injurious to perspicuity.

He then proves that the same action often proceeds from different motives.

“ Not always Actions shew the man: we  
“ find

“ Who does a kindness, is not therefore kind;

“ Perhaps Prosperity becalm'd his breast;

“ Perhaps the Wind just shifted from the east:

“ Not therefore humble he who seeks retreat,

“ Pride guides his steps, and bids him shun  
“ the Great:

“ Who combats bravely, is not therefore  
“ brave,

“ He dreads a death-bed like the meanest  
“ slave:

“ Who reasons wisely is not therefore wise,

“ His pride in Reas'ning, not in Acting lies.”

These reflections are extremely just and acute, and expressed with great conciseness and energy.

T

Another



Another error, that of judging men's characters from their station, the poet exposes in the following strain of delicate irony.

“ Court-Virtues bear, like Gems, the highest  
 “ rate,  
 “ Born where Heav’n’s influence scarce can  
 “ penetrate :  
 “ In life’s low vale the foil the Virtues like,  
 “ They please as beauties, here as wonders  
 “ strike.  
 “ Tho’ the same sun, with all-diffusive rays,  
 “ Blush in the Rose, and in the Di’mond blaze,  
 “ We prize the stronger effort of his pow’r,  
 “ And justly set the Gem above the Flow’r.”

These lines have uncommon merit. The ridicule is exquisite. The imagery is beautiful: and the just ordonnance of the figures admirably supported throughout.

The poet, in the last place, observes that the only clue to lead us to the true characters of men, and to unravel all the intricacies of their conduct, is the *RULING PASSION*. This he exemplifies in the character of Wharton, which is so inimitably drawn, that it is difficult to resist the pleasure of transcribing it; but it is needless to point out its beauties; since *characters* strike, and are imprinted in the memory of every common reader, while the *principles* of the poem make impressions on a few only.



Our author pursues his illustrations through a variety of characters, such as the debauchee, the glutton, the miser, the coquette, the courtier, &c. which he exhibits in a strain of exquisite ridicule, and at length concludes with the following elegant compliment to Lord Cobham.

“ And you! brave COBHAM, to the latest  
 “ breath,  
 “ Shall feel your ruling passion strong in  
 “ death:  
 “ Such in those moments as in all the past;  
 “ Oh, save my Country, Heav’n!” shall be  
 “ your last \*.”

In

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\* Lord Cobham, it seems, had perused this Epistle in the manuscript, and suggested some alterations, as may be concluded from the following original letters.

STOWE, Nov. 1, 1733.

“ Though I have not modesty enough not to be pleased  
 “ with your extraordinary compliment, I have wit enough  
 “ to know how little I deserve it. You know all mankind  
 “ are putting themselves upon the world for more than they  
 “ are worth, and their friends are daily helping the deceit.  
 “ But I am afraid I shall not pass for an absolute patriot,  
 “ however I have the honour of having received a public  
 “ testimony of your esteem and friendship, and am as proud  
 “ of it as I could be of any advantage which could happen  
 “ to me. As I remember, when I saw the Brouillion of  
 “ this epistle, it was perplexed; you have now made it the  
 “ contrary, and I think it is the clearest and the cleanest of  
 “ all you have wrote. Don’t you think you have bestowed  
 “ too many lines on the old lecher. The instance itself is  
 “ but ordinary, and I think should be shortened or changed.  
 “ Thank you; and believe me to be most sincerely yours,

“ COBHAM.”



In short, the poet, in this epistle, discovers great acuteness of observation, and an intimate know-

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From the next letter it appears that Mr. POPE adopted his Lordship's hint.

STOWE, Nov. 8.

" I like your Letcher better now 'tis shorter ; and the  
 " Glutton is a very good epigram. But they are both appe-  
 " tites, that from nature we indulge, as well for her ends,  
 " as our pleasure. A cardinal, in his way of pleasure, would  
 " have been a better instance. What do you think of an  
 " old Lady dressing her silver locks with pink, and order-  
 " ing her coffin to be lined with white quilted sattin with  
 " gold fringes ? Or Counsellor Vernon, retiring to enjoy  
 " himself with five thousand a year which he had got, and  
 " returning back to the Chancery to get a little more,  
 " when he could not speak so loud as to be heard ? Or a  
 " Judge turned out coming again to the bar ?——I mean  
 " that a passion or habit, that has not a natural foundation,  
 " fall in better with your subject, than any of our natural  
 " wants, which in some degree we cannot avoid pursuing to  
 " the last ; and if a man has spirits or appetite enough to  
 " take a bit of either kind at parting, you may condemn  
 " him, but you would be proud to imitate him.

" I congratulate you upon the fine weather. 'Tis a  
 " strange thing that people of condition and men of parts  
 " must enjoy it in common with the rest of the world. But  
 " now I think on't, their pursuits are generally after points  
 " of so great importance, that they do not enjoy it at all. I  
 " won't trouble you any longer, but with the assurance of  
 " what I hope you are perfectly convinced of, that I am  
 " most sincerely yours,  
 " C."

From these letters his lordship appears to have been a man of sense and vivacity ; his observations are just, liberal, and sprightly.

But



knowledge of the secret workings of the human mind. His reasoning is convincing, and he has the art of preserving the strictest method of argument, without the least appearance of an affected regularity. Add to this, that his illustrations are apt and forcible, his characters happily finished, and his versification perfectly tuneful and harmonious.

Impartiality however must acknowledge, that we here and there meet with some faulty lines. Such, perhaps, the following may be deemed, where, speaking of the bird who calls whore and knave from his cage, he adds——

“ Tho’ many a passenger he rightly call,  
“ You hold him no philosopher *at all*.”

These lines are in the familiar stile of common prosaic chit-chat; and the feeble expletives tacked to the end of the last line, for the sake of the rhyme, sink them almost even below that level.

With respect to the next epistle, that is, the Essay on the *Characters of Women*, it has unquestionably great merit.

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But where his Lordship speaks of the *Cardinal*, he quite mistakes the subject of the epistle; which concerns our natural, not unnatural passions. Our Poet’s pictures make, as he himself says, a *map of Man*, not of Monsters.

It must be added, in commendation of Mr. POPE, that on this, as on many other occasions, he prudently practised his own precept: And——

“ Made use of ev’ry Friend, and ev’ry Foe.”



The poet has herein shewn himself a man of the world, and intimately acquainted with the motley groupe of female caprices; which he has indeed exposed with a great deal of wit and pointed satire; but surely the strokes are here and there much too harsh and severe.

However I may hazard my reputation by the comparison, I do not scruple, in some few instances, to prefer Dr. Young's Satire on Women, in his *Universal Passion*: though it is, upon the whole, greatly inferior to Mr. POPE's in point of versification, order, wit, sentiment, ease, and penetration into nature\*.

In the passages alluded to, however, there appears to be in Young more of the *ridiculum acri* of Horace. What the learned commentator has observed, in his parallel between Horace and POPE, will, perhaps, in these instances, hold equally true between POPE and Young. What Young smiles at, POPE treats with the grave severity of Persius; and what POPE strikes with the caustic lightning of Juvenal, Young contents himself with turning into ridicule.

The latter laughs at their foibles with such becoming pleasantry and good humour, that

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\* Let not the reader imagine that any general comparison is intended between these two satirists. Mr. POPE's superiority is so manifest, that a man would expose himself to ridicule who should attempt to compare them. All that is meant is, that here and there Young has succeeded by some nicer touches better suited to the delicacy of the subject.



while they blush to see those foibles exposed, they are not angry with the author of the detection. The former, on the other hand, chastises their levities with so severe a lash, that the lively glow of resentment prevails over the suffusion of a modest blush. Young, in few words, corrects their peccant habits by gentle alteratives, while POPE irritates them by strong corrosives.

But a few instances, impartially selected, will best determine the propriety of these animadversions.

The opening of this epistle, which is addressed to a Lady, has great merit. It begins thus, with graceful ease and pleasantry.

“ Nothing so true as what you once let fall,

“ Most Women have no Characters at all.”

“ Matter too soft a lasting mark to bear,

“ And best distinguish’d by black, brown, or  
“ fair.

“ How many pictures of one Nymph we view,

“ All how unlike each other, all how true!

“ Arcadia’s Countess, here, in ermin’d pride,

“ Is there, Pastora by a fountain side.

“ Here Fannia, *leering*\* on her own good  
“ man,

“ And there, a naked Leda with a Swan.

“ Let

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\* In this passage the poet meant to display the contrast between *Fannia* looking at her husband in the attitude of a



- " Let then the Fair one beautifully cry,  
 " In Magdalen's loose hair and lifted eye,  
 " Or drest in smiles of sweet Cecilia shine,  
 " With simp'ring Angels, Palms, and Harps  
     " divine ;  
 " Whether the Charmer sinner it, or saint it,  
 " If Folly grow romantic, I must paint it.  
     " Come then, the colours and the ground  
         " prepare !  
 " Dip in the Rainbow, trick her off in Air ;  
 " Chuse a firm Cloud, before it fall, and in it  
 " Catch, ere she change, the Cynthia of this  
     " minute."

Thus far the raillery is exquisitely pleasant ; thus far is elegant and poetical. *Si sic omnia!* But mark what follows, where the poet exemplifies this principle of female inconsistency in particular characters : and first in the affected and flatteringly.

- " Rufa, whose eye quick-glancing o'er the  
     " Park,  
 " Attracts each light gay meteor of a Spark,  
 " Agrees as ill with Rufa studying Locke,  
 " As Sappho's di'monds with her dirty smock ;

---

modest matron ; and Fannia in the looser posture of an un-attired wanton. By the use of the epithet *leering*, the poet marks the lubricity of Fannia ; and as her *lubricity* would certainly betray itself while feigning conjugal affection, so the term *leering* has a peculiar beauty, though it seems, in some degree, to weaken the contrast.

" Or



“ Or Sappho at her toilet’s greasy task \*,  
 “ With Sappho fragrant at an ev’ning Mask ;  
 “ So morning infects that in muck begun,  
 “ Shine, buzz, and fly-blow in the setting sun.”

These lines, it must be confessed, are strongly satirical and witty. But are they not too harsh and inelegant for the occasion ? The true end of satire, is reformation. But was Sappho likely to become less a flatterer, by being thus rudely reprehended, in terms as foul, as that part of her attire could be which gave the poet offence ?

With respect to the simile of the morning insect, the thought is not original ; nor does it seem to be appropriated to illustrate the satire with that propriety for which our author was remarkable †.

There

\* What would our poet have said, had he lived to see the fashion of our modern Belles, who nightly encircle their powdered curls with a filken net, and do not suffer a comb to discompose them, for—I dare not say how long.

† Young, it may be thought, perhaps, has ridiculed the affected and flatteringly, with a softer pen.

Affectation he has thus exposed :

“ Here might I sing of Memmia’s mincing mien,  
 “ And all the movements of the soft machine :  
 “ How two red lips affected *Zephyrs* blow,  
 “ To cool the Bohea, and inflame the Beau ;  
 “ While one white finger, and a thumb, conspire  
 “ To lift the cup, and make the world admire.”

The



There is great beauty however and elegance in the following lines of Mr. POPE.

“ Ladies, like variegated Tulips, show;  
 “ ’Tis to their Changes half their charms we  
 “ owe;  
 “ Fine by defect, and delicately weak,  
 “ Their happy Spots the nice admirer take.”

But in the following instance, his indignation seems to have prevailed over his delicacy.

“ See Sin in State, majestically drunk;  
 “ Proud as a Peerefs, prouder as a Punk;  
 “ Chaste to her Husband, frank to all beside,  
 “ A teeming Mistrefs, but a barren Bride.  
 “ What then? let Blood and Body bear the  
 “ fault,  
 “ Her Head’s untouch’d, that noble feat of  
 “ Thought:  
 “ Such this day’s doctrine---in another fit  
 “ She fins with Poets thro’ pure Love of Wit,  
 “ What has not fir’d her bosom or her  
 “ brain?  
 “ Cæsar and Tall-boy; Charles and Charle-  
 “ ma’ne.”

The character of the flattern likewise is humorously described by Young, who shews great address in the two concluding lines, where he polishes the edge of satire, by first paying a just compliment to the charms of the sex.

“ Women were made to give our eyes delight,  
 “ A *female frown* is an odious sight,”



I am free to own, that if the wit in these lines was much more brilliant than it is, yet it would not atone for the inelegance of this passage. One might be apt to suspect that the poet was the partner of her sin, and that he penned these lines, while he yet smarted with the proofs of her infidelity.

Our author however makes us amends in the character of the witty and refined lady.

“ Wife Wretch ! with pleasures too refin’d to  
 “ please ;  
 “ With too much Spirit to be e’er at ease :  
 “ With too much Quickness ever to be taught ;  
 “ With too much Thinking to have common  
 “ Thought :  
 “ You purchase Pain with all that Joy can  
 “ give,  
 “ And die of nothing but a Rage to live.”

In these sentiments, there is a peculiar sprightliness, poignance and propriety. But the author, at this time, seems to have been so much out of temper with the fair sex, that he cannot long keep within the bounds of decorum, which he again breaks through in the following lines.

“ Woman and Fool are two hard things to hit ;  
 “ For true No-meaning puzzles more than  
 “ Wit.”

This is downright rudeness, without one spark of wit. More instances might be selected of  
 harsh



harsh and indelicate satire in this epistle\*; but as it is a much more pleasing office to display beauties, than to detect blemishes, let it suffice to have made these few sacrifices to impartiality, and let us turn our eyes to the following exquisite portrait of prudence without sympathy.

“ Yet Cloe sure was form’d without a spot.”--

“ Nature in her then err’d not, but forgot.

“ With ev’ry pleasing, ev’ry prudent part,

“ Say, what can Cloe want?---She wants a  
“ Heart.

“ She speaks, behaves, and acts just as she  
“ ought;

“ But never, never, reach’d one gen’rous  
“ Thought.

“ Virtue she finds too painful an endeavour,

“ Content to dwell in Decencies for ever.

“ So very reasonable, so unmov’d,

“ As never yet to love, or to be lov’d.

“ She, while her Lover pants upon her breast,

“ Can mark the figures on an Indian chest:

“ Or when she sees her Friend in deep despair,

“ Observes how much a Chintz exceeds Mo-  
“ hair.”

\* We here and there too meet with instances of faulty versification. For instance, speaking of the difficulty of female inconsistencies, he says—

“ — How should equal colours *do the knack*?

“ Cameleons who can paint in white and black?”

The simile here is extremely just and beautiful: but the phrase of *do the knack* is low, and unworthy the pen of so great a genius.

This



This is inimitably characteristical. This is penned with the true ease and spirit of polite satire. This is, *ridentem dicere verum*.

Our author proceeds with great accuracy to remark, that though the particular characters of women are, as he has shewn, more various than that of men, yet the general characteristic of the softer sex is more uniform, as to the *ruling passion*.

“ In Men, we various Ruling Passions find ;  
 “ In Women, two almost divide the kind ;  
 “ Those, only fix’d, they first or last obey,  
 “ The Love of Pleasure, and the Love of  
 “ Sway.”

Hence, his friend and commentator observes with his wonted acuteness, we see the perpetual necessity that women lie under of disguising their ruling passion, which is not the case in men. Now the variety of arts employed to this purpose, must needs draw them into infinite contradictions, even in those actions from whence their general and obvious character is denominated.

Having established these, as the two *ruling passions* in the sex, the poet goes on to shew how unsuccessful they are in the pursuit of these objects of their desires, which he finely illustrates : first, as to *Power*---Having observed, in the preceding line, that every lady would be queen for life, he adds---



“ Yet mark the fate of a whole Sex of Queens !

“ Pow’r all their end, but Beauty all the  
“ means :

“ In Youth they conquer, with so wild a rage,

“ As leaves them scarce a subject in their Age :

“ For foreign glory, foreign joy, they roam ;

“ No thought of peace or happiness at home.

“ But Wisdom’s triumph is well-tim’d Re-  
“ treat,

“ As hard a science to the Fair as Great !

“ Beauties, like Tyrants, old and friendless  
“ grown,

“ Yet hate repose, and dread to be alone,

“ Worn out in public, weary ev’ry eye,

“ Nor leave one sigh behind them when they  
“ die.”

Good sense, strong satire, and fine poetry are happily combined in this passage : there is great merit likewise in the following simile, which illustrates the miserable fate which attends the sex in their unsuccessful pursuit of *Pleasure*.

“ Pleasures the sex, as children Birds, pursue;

“ Still out of reach, but never out of view ;

“ Sure, if they catch, to spoil the Toy at  
“ most,

“ To covet flying, and regret when lost \*.”

Mr.

---

\* Beautiful, however, as this simile is, impartiality obliges me to own that I give the preference to Dr. Young’s on the same subject, which he thus illustrates—



Mr. POPE having exposed the fruitless pursuit of the two ruling passions which govern the sex, breaks out into the following pathetic lamentation, which is infinitely affecting.

“ See how the World its Veterans rewards !  
 “ A Youth of Frolics, an old Age of Cards ;  
 “ Fair to no purpose, artful to no end,  
 “ Young without Lovers, old without a Friend ;  
 “ A Fop their Passion, but their Prize a Sot,  
 “ Alive, ridiculous, and dead, forgot !”

Alas ! there is not a public assembly, or a private rout, but what affords too many melancholy examples of this moving and incomparable description.

The poet, towards the conclusion of the essay, turns from the severity of satire, to friendly admonition, in the following beautiful apostrophe.

“ Ah ! Friend ! to dazzle let the Vain design ;  
 “ *To raise the Thought, and touch the Heart*  
 “ *be thine !*

“ Pleasures are few, and fewer we enjoy,  
 “ Pleasure, like *quick-silver*, is *bright* and *coy* :  
 “ We strive to grasp it, with our utmost skill,  
 “ Still it *eludes us*, and it *glitters* still ;  
 “ If seiz'd at last, compute your mighty gains,  
 “ What is it, but rank poison in your veins ?”

This simile is finely conceived, and every word is happily chosen to sustain the comparison, which most aptly illustrates the fugacious nature of pleasure, our vain efforts to seize it, and its baneful effects, when seized.

“ That



" That Charm shall grow, while what fatigues  
   " the Ring,  
 " Flaunts and goes down, an unregarded  
   " thing :  
 " So when the Sun's broad beam has tir'd  
   " the fight,  
 " All mild ascends the Moon's more sober  
   " light,  
 " Serene in Virgin Modesty she shines,  
 " And unobserv'd the glaring Orb declines."

Nothing can be more poetical than this imagery, nor more artfully conducted. Every epithet is nicely appropriated to heighten the figure, and embellish the verse \*.

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\* Though nothing can be more delightful to the imagination, than the above passage in Mr. POPE, yet the following lines of Dr. Young's, perhaps, will be thought to approach nearer to the heart.

" Ah ! why so vain, tho' blooming in thy spring,  
 " Thou *shining, frail, ador'd, and wretched* thing !  
 " Old age *will* come, disease *may* come before,  
 " *Fifteen* is full as mortal as *threescore*.  
 " Thy fortune and thy charms may soon decay ;  
 " But grant these *fugitives* prolong their stay,  
 " Their basis totters, their foundation shakes,  
 " Life that supports them, in a moment breaks ;  
 " Then *wrought* into the soul let virtue shine,  
 " The *ground* eternal, as the *work* divine."

The reader will observe, that there is the same moral turn of sentiment, and that in fact the same *precept* is inculcated in both. But in Mr. POPE, the splendor of the imagery so dazzles the imagination, that it diverts the precept from the heart.

This



This passage, however, leads me to mark one general objection to this essay of Mr. POPE's, which is, that though he strongly satirizes the foibles and follies of the softer sex, yet he scarce ever relaxes the severity of satire, by interpersing moral precepts, which may teach them to avoid or amend what is reprehensible. There is but one single line in the whole essay, in which he has offered any thing like *advice* to the fair, and that stands distinguished above in Italics.

Young, on the other hand, occasionally softens the asperity of satire, and appears in the more amiable character of a friend and monitor. How moral, how tender, and persuasive is the conclusion of the fifth satire, where he directs the fair *whom*, and *how*, they should study to charm.

“ Then please the *best*: and know, for men of  
“ sense

“ Your strongest charms, are native innocence.

“ *Arts* on the mind, like *paint* upon the face,

“ Fright him, that's worth your love, from  
“ your embrace.

“ In simple manners all the secret lies,

“ Be kind and virtuous, you'll be blest and  
“ wise.

“ Vain show, and noise, intoxicate the brain,

“ Begin with giddiness, and end in pain.

“ Affect not empty Fame, and idle praise,

“ Which, all those wretches I describe, betrays;

“ Your sex's glory 'tis to shine unknown,

“ Of all applause, be fondest of your own.

U

“ Beware



- " Beware the fever of the *mind* ! that thirst  
 " With which this age is eminently curst.  
 " To drink of pleasure but inflames desire,  
 " And abstinence alone can quench the fire :  
 " Take pain from life, and terror from the  
     " tomb,  
 " Give peace in hand, and promise bliss to  
     " come."

How exquisitely chaste is Young's idea of female modesty !

- " *Naked* in nothing should a woman be,  
 " But veil *her very wit* with *Modesty* ;  
 " Let man *discover*, let not her *display*,  
 " But yield her *charms of mind* with sweet  
     " delay."

With what propriety and delicacy does he define female beauty, and explain the cause of those powerful and lasting impressions, which we receive from forms in which there is no strong degree of external attraction !

- " What's female beauty, but an air divine  
 " Through which the mind's all-gentle graces  
     " shine ?  
 " They, like the sun, irradiate all between ;  
 " The body charms, because the soul is seen.  
 " Hence, men are often captives of a face,  
 " They know not why, of no peculiar grace ;  
 " Some forms, tho' bright, no mortal man  
     " can bear ;  
 " Some, none resist, tho' not exceeding fair."

In



In short, Young, as I have premised, though by no means equal to Mr. POPE in the various essentials of a fine poet, seems, nevertheless, in these particular points of comparison, to be more master of that easy pleasant raillery, and of that urbanity and tenderness, which so soft a subject seems peculiarly to demand\*.

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\* Mr. POPE's sentiments of Dr. Young, as expressed to his friend the present Bishop of Gloucester, may not be unentertaining to the Reader.

Mr. POPE thought Dr. Young had much of a sublime genius, though without common sense; so that his genius, having no guide, was perpetually liable to degenerate into bombast. This made him pass a foolish youth, the sport of peers and poets. But his having a very good heart, enabled him to support the clerical character when he assumed it, first with decency, and afterward with honour.

The want of reasonable ideas in this ingenious writer, so pregnant with imagination, occasioned the same absence and distraction in company, which has frequently been observed to befall philosophic men, through the abundance of theirs. But his absence being on that account attended with much absurdity, it was not only excused, but enjoyed. He gave, throughout his life, many wonderful examples of this turn, or rather debility, of mind; of which, one will suffice. When he had determined to go into orders, he addressed himself, like an honest man, for the best directions in the study of theology. But to whom did he apply? It may, perhaps, be thought, to Sherlock or Atterbury; to Burnet or Hare. No! to Mr. POPE: who, in a youthful frolic, recommended Thomas Aquinas to him. With this treasure he retired, in order to be free from interruption, to an obscure place in the suburbs. His director hearing no more of him in six months, and apprehending he might have carried the jest too far, sought after him, and found him out just in time to prevent an irretrievable derangement.



Mr. POPE, every now and then, loses sight of Horace's precept——

“ *Ne scutica dignum, horribili sectere flagello.*”

In truth, his satires in general are liable to this objection: as was kindly intimated to him by his benevolent friend Arbuthnot, who advised him rather to study to reform, than to chastise.

But when female characters are the objects of satire, such severity is particularly reprehensible. It betrays not only a want of good breeding, but of good policy. It is our interest to shade the defects of the softer sex, the better to conceal our own; for since we are all, in some degree, under the influence of their attractions, the more we depreciate them, the lower we degrade ourselves.

The two remaining Epistles on the *Use of Riches*, are members of the large design above described. The extremes of avarice and profusion in general, are treated of in the first epistle; the latter being confined to one particular branch of profusion, namely, the vanity of expence in people of wealth and condition: It is therefore a corollary to the preceding, in the same manner as the Epistle on the *Characters of Women*, is to that of the *Knowledge and Characters of Men*.

Nevertheless, these epistles were not published in the order in which they stand in the octavo edition,



edition, and which indeed the nature of the subject requires, the latter having been penned and made public before the former, on an occasion which will be explained hereafter.

The first of these epistles is penned with great ease and vivacity. Mr. POPE, nevertheless, somewhere says, that it cost him a great deal of labour and attention; and he has been heard to declare, in private conversation, that what he wrote fastest, always pleased most \*.

This epistle, therefore, having been *laboured* into *ease*, may be among the reasons why it is not so pleasing, at least to the writer of these sheets, as those which precede it.

It is true, we meet with many fallies of keen wit, and strokes of fine poetry in it; but they are more thinly scattered than in the foregoing essays. At the same time, it would be difficult to point out any glaring blemishes: in short, compared with *his* other works, it has, some few inimitable passages excepted, too much of the *mediocre* in it: and it must necessarily please less now than at the time of its first publication, as most of the facts and characters recorded in it, and which then made it interesting, have been long since forgotten.

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\* An instance of which he gave, not only in the Rape of the Lock, but in the Poem on the Characters of Women, just now spoken of; which he wrote at once in a heat, not of malice or resentment, but of pure, though strong, poetical fire: And, indeed, notwithstanding the objections above made to it, it well deserved the distinguished reception it met with.



Nevertheless, there is great merit in the following lines of this epistle, which is by way of dialogue between our Poet and Lord Bathurst †, to whom it is addressed, wherein our author shews, by a witty transposition, that the utmost which wealth can bestow is but the power of diversifying the three necessities of life into various modes of luxury.

“ P. What Riches give us let us then en-  
“ quire :

“ Meat, Fire, and Clothes. B. What more ?

“ P. Meat, Clothes, and Fire.

“ Is this too little ? would you more than live ?

“ Alas ! ’tis more than Turner finds they give.

“ Alas ! ’tis more than (all his Visions past)

“ Unhappy Wharton, waking, found at last !

“ What can they give ? to dying Hopkins,

“ Heirs ;

“ To Chartres, Vigour ; Japhet, Nose and Ears ?

“ Can they, in gems bid pallid Hippia glow,

“ In Fulvia’s buckle ease the throbs below ? \*

The images likewise by which the poet illustrates the extremes of parsimony and prodigality, are extremely beautiful and poetical.

† This nobleman, who has ever been a friend to men of learning and genius, distinguished Mr. POPE above all others, and associated with him on the footing of particular intimacy.

\* The lines which follow, concerning *Narfes*, are indecent and filthy. It is degrading genius to adopt illustrations which are obvious to a link-boy.



“ Riches, like insects, when conceal’d they lie,

“Wait but for wings, and in their season fly.

"Who sees pale Mammon pine amidst his

“fore,

“ Sees but a backward steward for the Poor ;

“ This year a Refervoir, to keep and spare ;

“The next, a Fountain, spouting through his

"Heir,

“In lavish streams to quench a Country's

“thirst,

“ And men and dogs shall drink him till

“ they burst.”

But the following exemplification of the extreme of parsimony, in the character of *Cotta*, is as striking as any perhaps that our poet ever delineated.

“ Old Cotta sham’d his fortune and his birth,

“ Yet was not Cotta void of wit or worth :

“What tho’ (the use of barb’rous spits forgot)

“ His kitchen vy’d in coolness with his grot ?

"His court with nettles, moats with cressies

“ stor’d,

“ With soups unbought and fallads blefs'd

"his board?"

“ If Cotta liv'd on pulfe, it was no more

“ Than Bramins, Saints, and Sages did before ;

"To cram the Rich was prodigal expence,

“ And who would take the Poor from Provi-

" dence ?

"Like some lone Chartreux stands the good

“ old hall,

“ Silence without, and fasts within the wall ;



“ No rafter’d roofs with dance and tabor  
     “ found,  
 “ No noon-tide bell invites the country round :  
 “ Tenants with sighs the smoakless tow’rs  
     “ survey,  
 “ And turn th’ unwilling steeds another way :  
 “ Benighted wanderers, the forest o’er,  
 “ Curs’d the fav’d candle, and unop’ning door ;  
 “ While the gaunt mastiff, growling at the  
     “ gate,  
 “ Affrights the beggar whom he longs to eat.”

This passage affords instances of various beauties. In the first ten lines there is a great deal of sprightly raillery, pleasant irony, and sarcastic wit. Those which immediately follow are beautifully descriptive, they are perfectly picturesque.

The other extreme of prodigality, exemplified in the character of his son, is not inferior.

The poet then proceeds to point out the *true use* of riches in the following beautiful lines.

“ To Worth or Want well weigh’d, be Bounty  
     “ giv’n,  
 “ And ease, or emulate, the care of Heav’n ;  
 “ (Whose measure full o’erflows on human  
     “ race)  
 “ Mend Fortune’s fault, and justify her grace.  
 “ Wealth in the gross is death, but life dis-  
     “ fus’d ;  
 “ As Poison heals, in just proportion us’d :  
                                     “ In



“ In heaps, like Ambergris, a stink it lies,  
 “ But well’dispers’d, is Incense to the Skies.”

These figures admirably illustrate the precept which the poet here inculcates; and which is likewise happily exemplified in the portrait of the *Man of Rofs*. Bénévolence is there painted in a most amiable light \*. Few, however, are unacquainted with this picture; let us therefore turn to the noble apostrophe which follows.

The poet having observed that the fund for the diffusive bounty which the *Man of Rofs* displayed, was but five hundred pounds a year; thus breaks forth——

“ Blush, Grandeur, blush! proud Courts, with-  
 “ draw your blaze!  
 “ Ye little Stars! hide your diminish’d  
 “ rays.”

Lord B. then, by way of surprise, makes the following interrogations.

\* As a proof of the pleasure which our author sincerely felt in painting virtue, hear what he says in one of his letters to Mr. Bethel.

“ I have been so pleased when I meet with a good example  
 “ or character (as it is a curiosity now) that I have sent ex-  
 “ press enquiries after the particulars, to be exact in the  
 “ celebration of it; and with great contentment find, that  
 “ what I write of the good works of the *Man of Rofs*, is to  
 “ a tittle true,”

“ B,



“ B. And what ? no monument, inscription,  
“ stone ?

“ His race, his form, his name almost un-  
“ known ?”

To which the poet replies :

“ P. Who builds a Church to God, and not to  
“ Fame,

“ Will never mark the marble with his Name :

“ Go, search it there, where to be born and  
“ die,

“ Of rich and poor, makes all the history ;

“ Enough, that Virtue fill'd the space between ;

“ Prov'd by the ends of being, to have been.

“ When Hopkins dies, a thousand lights at-  
“ tend

“ The wretch, who living sav'd a candle's  
“ end :

“ Should'ring God's altar, a vile image stands,

“ Belies his features, nay extends his hands ;

“ That live-long wig, which Gorgon's self  
“ might own,

“ Eternal buckle takes in Parian stone.

“ Behold what blessings Wealth to life can lend !

“ And see, what comfort it affords our end !”

Strong satire, sound morality, and poignant  
ridicule, here charm us alternately.

The observant reader must have remarked  
many instances of the happy address with which  
our poet glides into method, as it were unper-  
ceived, without the affectation of order. Here  
the



the two concluding lines prepare us for one of the most highly finished and striking descriptions, of any perhaps in our poet's works.

Having shewn, in the instance of *Cotta* and his son, that riches can afford no real happiness in life, he proceeds to shew that they can secure us no comfort at our end. This he exemplifies in the character of Villers, who having been possessed of fifty thousand pounds a year, and filled many of the highest posts in the kingdom, at length died wretchedly in a remote inn in Yorkshire; which the poet thus finely describes.

“ In the worst inn’s worst room, with mat half-  
 “ hung,  
 “ With floor of plaister, and the walls of dung,  
 “ On once a flock-bed, but repair’d with straw,  
 “ With tape-ty’d curtains, never meant to  
 “ draw,  
 “ The George and Garter dangling from that  
 “ bed  
 “ Where tawdry yellow strove with dirty red,  
 “ Great Villers lies---Alas! how chang’d from  
 “ him,  
 “ That life of pleasure, and that soul of whim!  
 “ Gallant and gay, in Cliveden’s proud alcove,  
 “ The bow’r of wanton Shrewsbury and love;  
 “ Or just as gay, at Council, in a ring  
 “ Of mimic statesmen, and their merry King.  
 “ No Wit to flatter, left of all his store!  
 “ No Fool to laugh at, which he valu’d more.  
 “ There,



“ There, Victor of his health, of fortune,  
 “ friends,  
 “ And fame; this lord of useless thousands  
 “ ends.”

With what happy skill has the poet heightened the distress of this Lord's miserable end, by the glaring contrast of his former splendor! How sensibly we feel the depth of his misery, when our imagination compares the proud Alcove of Cliveden, the Bower of love; with the poor flock bed repaired with straw, and all the scanty wretched apparatus with which the poet has furnished it. But the beauty of description, is not the only merit of this passage.

The poet, having shewn that wealth, abused, in either extreme of avarice or profusion, can afford no enjoyment to the possessor, he goes on farther to shew that it becomes a curse, which is the moral of the poem, and is finely illustrated in the admirable fable of Sir Balaam, which is too publickly known and admired, to require any critical animadversion.

The next epistle on the *use of riches*, addressed to Lord Burlington, treats, as has been intimated, of one branch of profusion only, which is the vanity of expence in persons of fortune and rank.

This abounds with beauties, and in an easy pleasant vein of exquisite ridicule exposes the preposterous modes of wrong taste.

“ For



“ For what has Virro painted, built, and  
 “ planted ?

“ Only to show, how many Tastes he wanted.

“ What brought Sir Visto’s ill got wealth to  
 “ waste ?

“ Some Demon whisper’d, “ Visto ! have a  
 “ Taste.”

“ Heav’n visits with a taste the wealthy fool,

“ And needs no Rod but Ripley with a Rule.”

The poet then, after paying a compliment to Lord Burlington, who was at that time publishing the designs of Inigo Jones, and of the modern ornaments of Italy, proceeds to rally the absurdities which result from injudicious and awkward imitation.

“ Yet shall (my Lord) your just, your noble  
 “ rules

“ Fill half the land with Imitating-Fools ;

“ Who random drawings from your sheets  
 “ shall take,

“ And of one beauty many blunders make ;

“ Load some vain Church with old Theatric  
 “ state,

“ Turn Arcs of triumph to a Garden-gate ;

“ Reverse your Ornaments ; and hang them all

“ On some patch’d dog-hole ek’d with ends of  
 “ wall ;

“ Then clap four slices of Pilaster on’t,

“ That, lac’d with bits of rustic, makes a Front.

“ Shall call the winds through long arcades  
 “ to roar,

“ Proud to catch cold at a Venetian door ;

“ Con-



“ Conscious they act a true Palladian part,  
 “ And if they starve, they starve by rules of  
 “ art.”

There is a great deal of true wit and pleasantry in these lines. But the poet having thus pleasantly and sarcastically ridiculed false taste, proceeds to shew wherein *true taste* consists: and first, he observes that *good sense* is the foundation of *true taste*, whose office it is to embellish nature with suitable ornaments.

\* \* \* \* \*

“ In all, let Nature never be forgot,  
 “ But treat the Goddess like a modest fair,  
 “ Nor over-dress, nor leave her wholly bare;  
 “ Let not each beauty ev’ry where be spy’d,  
 “ Where half the skill is decently to hide.  
 “ He gains all points, who pleasingly con-  
 “ founds,  
 “ Surprizes, varies, and conceals the Bounds.”

There is great delicacy in this illustration of the modest fair \*: and the following personification of Genius is highly poetical.

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\* It is much to be wished that our lovely Belles were convinced of the utility of this precept, not to *over-dress*. The just observance of it, would greatly improve their charms; as there are few, who do not, in some degree, disfigure themselves by a superfluity of ill-assorted ornaments. A certain degree of plainness and simplicity, gives us an idea of innocence and modesty; and these softer charms, whatever women may think, are much more inviting than all the decorations of dress, or graces of coquetry.

“ Con-



" Consult the *Genius* of the Place in all ;  
 " *That* tells the Waters or to rise, or fall ;  
 " Or helps th' ambitious Hill the Heav'ns to  
   " scale,  
 " Or scoops in circling theatres the Vale ;  
 " Calls in the Country, catches op'ning  
   " Glades,  
 " Joins willing Woods, and varies Shades from  
   " Shades ;  
 " Now breaks, or now directs, th' intending  
   " Lines ;  
 " Paints as you plant, and, as you work,  
   " designs."

The poet displays admirable skill in the management of these bold figures, which are as chaste and correct, as they are sublime and beautiful. What a noble and delightful design has he here depicted ! And with what mastery of language is every epithet happily selected gradually to raise, and finally to perfect, the representation of this enchanting scene !

How unlike to this, is *Timon's* idea of magnificence, which displays neither sense nor taste, and which is admirably ridiculed in the following inimitable description.

" At Timon's Villa let us pass a day,  
 " Where all cry out, " What fums are  
   " thrown away !"  
 " So proud, so grand ; of that stupendous air,  
 " Soft and Agreeable come never there.  
   " Great-



“ Greatness, with Timon, dwells in such a  
 “ draught

“ As brings all Brobdignag before your thought.

“ To compass this, his building is a Town,

“ His pond an Ocean, his parterre a Down :

“ Who but must laugh, the Master when he  
 “ fees,

“ A puny insect, shiv’ring at a breeze !

“ Lo, what huge heaps of littleness around !

“ The whole a labour’d Quarry above ground.

“ Two Cupids squirt before : a Lake behind

“ Improves the keenness of the Northern  
 “ wind.

“ His Gardens next your admiration call,

“ On every side you look, behold the Wall !

“ No pleasing intricacies intervene,

“ No artful wildness to perplex the scene ;

“ Grove nods at Grove, each Alley has a  
 “ brother,

“ And half the platform just reflects the other.

“ The suff’ring eye inverted Nature sees,

“ Trees cut to Statues, Statues thick as trees ;

“ With here a Fountain, never to be play’d ;

“ And there a Summer-house, that knows no  
 “ shade ;

“ Here Amphitrite sails through myrtle bow’rs ;

“ There Gladiators fight, or die in flow’rs ;

“ Unwater’d see the drooping sea-horse mourn,

“ And swallows roost in Nilus’ dusty Urn.”

The shafts of ridicule perhaps never bore a sharper point than in the foregoing description, which is so incomparably fine and striking, that  
 it



it is no wonder it raised the resentment which, we shall presently see, it excited. It is observable likewise, with what happy dexterity the poet, in exposing the absurdities of false taste, has negatively prescribed the rules of true taste.

Timon's study, his furniture, his loaded table, his awkward hospitality, next become the objects of keen raillery: but to select all the beauties of this piece, would be to transcribe the poem, which he concludes with a compliment to his two noble friends, who set examples of magnificence in planting and building, where both sense and taste concur.

“ Who then shall grace, or who improve the  
“ Soil?

“ Who plants like *Bathurst* \*, or who builds  
“ like *Boyle*.”

There is one admirable beauty in the conclusion of this poem which must not be omitted, where the poet, in these two beautiful

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\* The beautiful plantations at this nobleman's estate at *Cirencester* have indeed graced the soil, which of itself is far from being the most inviting. It is remarkable that his Lordship, as I have been well assured, began these plantations, in which he has displayed such an elegance of taste, after he had reached his fortieth year; and he has had the rare felicity not only of living to see them in a state of perfection, but of preserving such a degree of health and vigour, as enable him to enjoy the delightful scenes he may be said to have created. In his early days, he not only figured in the political world, but he was the delight of every social circle: And even now, at an age to which few advance, he still retains that cheerfulness and urbanity which at once refine and enliven conversation.



lines, gives a short summary of his precepts for true taste.

“ 'Tis Use alone that sanctifies Expence,  
“ And Splendor borrows all her rays from  
“ Sense.”

How just the thought! How poetical the expression! This is to attain the true end of poetry; for at the same time that it convinces the judgment, it charms the imagination.

The character of Timon, as might well have been expected, raised a violent outcry \* against the poet, on a supposition that his satire was pointed at a noble Duke, who was, in fact, more distinguished by his magnificence, than his elegance.

It was impossible for our poet to prove the innocence of his intention, which rested only in his own mind. But every thing was done to palliate the matter, and, as far as possible, to remove the imputation.

This essay, however, was so well received by the public, that in a short time, it passed into a third edition. On the publication of it, our author addressed a letter to Lord Burlington, wherein he takes notice that the clamour raised about his epistle, could not give him so much

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\* It was after the violent outcry against our author on this occasion, that the first Epistle on the use of Riches, was written.



pain, as he received pleasure in seeing the general zeal of the world in the cause of a great man who is beneficent, and the particular warmth of his noble friend in that of a private man who was innocent.

“ It was not the poem,” says he, “ that deserved this from you, for as I had the honour to be your friend, I would not treat you quite like a poet : but sure the writer deserved more candor even from those who knew him not, than to promote a report which in regard to that noble person, was impertinent, in regard to me, villainous. Yet I had no great cause to wonder, that a character belonging to twenty should be applied to one, since, by that means, nineteen would escape the ridicule. I was too well content with my knowledge of that noble person’s opinion in this affair to trouble the public about it.

“ Since malice and mistake,” he continues, “ are so long dying, I have taken the opportunity of a third edition, to declare his belief, not only of my innocence, but of their malignity; of the former of which my own heart is as conscious, as I fear some of theirs must be of the latter. His humanity feels a concern for the injury done to me, while his greatness of mind can bear with indifference the insult offered to himself.”

Towards the conclusion he adds, — “ I have learned there are some who would rather be  
X 2
“ wicked



“ wicked than ridiculous ; and therefore it may  
 “ be safer to attack vices than follies. I will  
 “ therefore leave my betters in the quiet possession  
 “ of their idols, their groves, and their  
 “ high places ; and change my subject from  
 “ their pride to their meanness, from their vanities  
 “ to their miseries ; and as the only way to  
 “ avoid misconstructions, to lessen offences, and  
 “ not to multiply ill-natured applications, I  
 “ may probably in my next, make use of real  
 “ names, instead of fictitious ones.”

In the third volume of his works, now under consideration, there is a fifth epistle addressed to Mr. Addison, occasioned by his Dialogues on Medals ; and as the fourth epistle treated of one particular branch of profusion, that is, the vanity of expence in people of fortune and condition, so this ridicules one branch of that vanity, which is displayed in the collection of old coins, and may therefore very properly be considered as a corollary to the fourth epistle. The extreme folly of the wrong directed Virtuoso-Taste for medals, is finely ridiculed in the following lines.

“ With sharpen'd sight pale Antiquaries pore,  
 “ Th' inscription value, but the rust adore.  
 “ This the blue varnish, that the green en-  
 “ dears,  
 “ The sacred rust of twice ten hundred years !  
 “ To gain Pescennius one employs his  
 “ schemes,  
 “ One grasps a Cecrops in ecstatic dreams,  
 “ Poor



“ Poor Vadius, long with learned spleen de-  
 “ your’d,  
 “ Can taste no pleasure since his *shield* was  
 “ scour’d:  
 “ And Curio, restless by the Fair One’s side,  
 “ Sighs for an Otho, and neglects his bride.”

The pleasant raillery of these lines is admirable, and is more likely to correct such an absurd and preposterous taste, than a grave and formal reproof.

This was the last of our author’s moral essays; and in one of his letters to Dean Swift, he accounts for his declining them.

“ I am,” says he, “ almost at the end of  
 “ my morals, as I have been long ago of my  
 “ wit; my system is a short one, and my circle  
 “ narrow. Imagination has no limits; that is  
 “ a sphere in which you may move on to eter-  
 “ nity: but where one is confined to truth, or  
 “ to speak more like a human creature, to the  
 “ appearances of truth, we soon find the short-  
 “ ness of our tether.”

Among the lesser pieces in this volume, we must not omit taking notice of the little ode, intitled, *The dying Christian to his Soul*, in imitation of the Emperor Adrian’s; which is very poetical and sublime, and much superior to the original, wherein there is something little and puerile.

The publication of the *Ethic Epistles* having raised a vast clamour against the author, he took



occasion to answer the slanderers in some satires in imitation of Horace. He thought, as he tells us, that an answer from Horace was both more full and of more dignity than any he could have made in his own person; and the example of much greater freedom in so eminent a divine as Dr. Donne, seemed a proof with what indignation and contempt a Christian may treat vice or folly, in ever so low, or ever so high, a station.

These satires are by no means equal in point of versification to his other compositions\*; but they abound in strokes of wit and spirit. They are not, as his learned Commentator observes, a paraphrase of Horace, or a faithful copy of his genius and manner of writing. In many places, nevertheless, the imitation is superior to the original. For instance, in the following passage from the imitation of the first Satire of the second Book of Horace, addressed to Mr. Fortescue †.

“ *Nec*

\* It must be considered, however, that as the originals were *sermoni propria*, the Poet would have transgressed every rule of imitation, had he given them all the force and harmony of his versification. Nevertheless he could not forbear to do it on many occasions.

† This eminent lawyer, who afterward became a judge, appears to have been among our author's most familiar and esteemed friends. He was, though a lawyer, a man of some wit and fancy. The whimsical case of the pied Horses, penned in ridicule of the old musty Reports, was the joint composition of this gentleman and Mr. POPE. Our author frequently mentions him in his familiar correspondence, in terms of the most cordial esteem. In a letter to Mr. Allen, he says, — “ You must assure judge Fortescue of my friend-  
“ ship,



“ *Nec quisquam noceat, cupido mihi pacis ! at*  
 “ *ille,*  
 “ *Qui me commôrit, (melius non tangere, clamo)*  
 “ *Flebit, et insignis tota cantabitur urbe.*”

Thus improved——

“ Peace is my dear delight---not Fleury’s more :  
 “ But touch me, and no Minister so fore.  
 “ Whoe’er offends, at some unlucky time  
 “ Slides into verse, and hitches in a rhyme,  
 “ Sacred to Ridicule his whole life long,  
 “ And the sad burden of some merry song.”

There is a delicacy and pleasantry in this apology for the severity of his satire, which seems to excel the original : which is again surpassed, in point of spirit, in these lines.

“ *Cervius iratus leges minitatur et urnam ;*  
 “ *Canidia Albuti, quibus est inimica, venenum ;*  
 “ *Grande malum Turius, si quid se judice certes.*”

\* \* \* \* \*

“ ship, and admit him to yours ; so justice and righteousness will meet.”

On other occasions, speaking of him to the same friend, he expresses himself somewhat jocularly :—“ I have just seen  
 “ Mr. Justice Fortescue, who is very mindful of your kind  
 “ distinction, and reckons the notice of a man of worth, no  
 “ small one. Every man bears respect to virtue, even a  
 “ lawyer and a courtier. The wonder is, when an honest dis-  
 “ interested man, will descend to take notice of *them*, which  
 “ really nothing but charity could make us do.”



- " Slander or Poison dread from Delia's rage,  
 " Hard words or hanging, if your Judge be  
     " Page.  
 " From furious Sappho scarce a milder fate,  
 " P--x'd by her love, or libell'd by her  
     " hate\*."

It must be confessed, however, that the passages which follow, are, as the annotator has remarked, greatly below the original; and it may be added, much inferior to our author himself.

But our poet soon, however, towers above his original, and darts forth such lively flashes of indignation, as could only proceed from the vigour of genius, warmed with the glow of virtue.

- " What? arm'd for Virtue when I point the  
     " pen,  
 " Brand the bold front of shameless guilty  
     " men;  
 " Dash the proud Gamester in his gilded Car,  
 " Bare the mean Heart that lurks beneath a  
     " Star;

---

\* These four lines gave great offence to two court Ladies, who deemed themselves touched: and the Poet employed Lord Cobham to mediate with them, which he long attempted to no purpose. At length, however, he satisfied them both by this ingenious expedient, which was, that Mr. POPE, in the future editions, should give the *p--xing* to *Delia*, and the *poisoning* to *Sappho*.

" Can



“ Can there be wanting, to defend Her cause,  
 “ Lights of the Church, or Guardians of the  
 “ Laws ?

“ Could pension’d Boileau last in honest  
 “ strain

“ Flatt’rers and Bigots ev’n in Louis’ reign ?

“ Could Laureate Dryden Pimp and Fry’r en-  
 “ gage,

“ Yet neither Charles nor James be in a rage ?

“ And I not strip the gilding off a Knave,

“ Unplac’d, unpension’d, no man’s heir, or  
 “ slave ?

“ I will, or perish in the gen’rous cause :

“ Hear this, and tremble ! you, who ’scape the  
 “ Laws.

“ Yes, while I live, no rich or noble knave

“ Shall walk the world, in credit, to his grave.

“ To Virtue only and her friends a friend,

“ The World beside may murmur, or com-  
 “ mend.

“ Know, all the distant din that world can keep,

“ Rolls o’er my Grotto, and but soothes my  
 “ sleep.

“ There, my retreat the best Companions grace,

“ Chiefs out of war, and Statesmen out of  
 “ place.”

The conscious pride likewise with which he speaks of his familiarity with the great, is displayed with becoming spirit and dignity.

“ Envy must own, I live among the Great,

“ No Pimp of pleasure, and no Spy of state,

“ With



“ With eyes that pry not, tongue that ne’er  
     “ repeats,  
 “ Fond to spread friendships, and to cover  
     “ heats ;  
 “ To help who want, to forward who excel ;  
 “ This all who know me, know ; who love  
     “ me, tell ;  
 “ And who unknown defame me, let them  
     “ be  
 “ Scriblers or Peers, alike are Mob to me.”

This is, indeed, *sumere superbiam quæsitam meritis !*

It is to be observed that Lord Harvey and Lady Mary ————— were supposed to have been described in this epistle, so characteristically, under the names of Lord *Fanny* and *Sappho*, that these two noble personages did not omit any means to gratify their resentment.

The Lady, in particular, was, as may well be imagined, highly offended that the public should apply the character of Sappho to her ; and complained of the insult to her acquaintance, and especially to Lord Peterborough, whom she would have engaged to expostulate with Mr. POPE, as we learn from the following letter which that nobleman addressed to her.

“ MADAME,

“ I was very unwilling to have my name made  
 “ use of in an affair in which I have no concern,  
     “ and



“ and therefore would not engage myself to  
 “ speak to Mr. POPE; but he coming to my  
 “ house the moment you went away, I gave  
 “ him as exact an account as I could of our  
 “ conversation.

“ He said to me, what I had taken the liberty  
 “ to say to you, that he wondered how the town  
 “ would apply these lines to any but some noted  
 “ common woman; that he should yet be more  
 “ surprized, if you should take them to your-  
 “ self. He named to me four remarkable  
 “ poetesses and scriblers, Mrs. Centlivre, Mrs.  
 “ Haywood, Mrs. Manly and Mrs. Ben, ladies  
 “ famous indeed in their generation, and some  
 “ of them esteemed to have given very unfor-  
 “ tunate favours to their friends, assuring me  
 “ that such only were the objects of his satire.

“ I hope this assurance will prevent your fur-  
 “ ther mistake, and any consequences upon so  
 “ odd a subject. I have nothing more to add.

“ Your Ladyship’s \*

“ Most humble and obedient servant,

“ PETERBOROUGH.”

Nor

\* Mr. POPE, in a letter to Mr. Bethel, then in Italy, speaks of this Lady with a great deal of jocularity.

“ You mention,” says he, “ the fame of my old acquaint-  
 “ tance, Lady *Mary*, as spread over Italy. Neither you  
 “ delight



Nor was his Lordship less offended. In short, the two noble personages, not only returned the attack with their pens\*, but exerted all their influence among the nobility, and even with the King and Queen, to do him prejudice: This last attempt was what most affected our poet, and of which he expressed the highest indignation, in the following letter to the noble Lord; which, as it is said, was shewn to her Majesty as soon as it was finished.

“ I beseech your Lordship to consider the injury  
 “ a man of your high rank and credit may do  
 “ to a private person, under penal laws and  
 “ many other disadvantages, not for want of  
 “ honesty or conscience, but merely, perhaps,  
 “ for having *too weak a head, or too tender a*  
 “ *heart*. It is by these alone I have hitherto  
 “ lived excluded from all posts of profit or trust :  
 “ As I can interfere with the views of no man,  
 “ do not deny me, my Lord, all that is left; a  
 “ little praise, or the common encouragement  
 “ due, if not to my genius, at least to my  
 “ industry.

---

“ delight in telling, nor I in hearing, the particulars which  
 “ acquire such a reputation; yet, I wish you had just told  
 “ me, if the character be more avaritious, or amatory?  
 “ And which passion has got the better at last.”

\* They published a poem, long since forgotten, called Verses addressed to the Imitator of Horace: in which they betrayed the utmost rage of resentment, and rancour of scurrility. It was a fine picture of malice, checked by impotence; and fury, choaked by phlegm.

“ Above



“ Above all, your Lordship will be careful  
 “ not to wrong my moral character, with those  
 “ under whose protection I live; and through  
 “ whose lenity alone I can live with comfort.  
 “ Your Lordship, I am confident, upon considera-  
 “ tion, will think you inadvertently went a  
 “ little too far, when you recommended to their  
 “ perusal, and strengthened by the weight of  
 “ your approbation, a libel, mean in its reflec-  
 “ tions upon my poor figure, and scandalous in  
 “ those on my honour and integrity; wherein  
 “ I was represented as an enemy to the human  
 “ race, a murderer of reputations, a monster  
 “ marked by God like Cain, deserving to wan-  
 “ der accursed through the world.----A strange  
 “ picture of a man, who had the good fortune  
 “ to enjoy many friends, who will always be  
 “ remembered as the first ornaments of their  
 “ age and country, and no enemies that ever  
 “ contrived to be heard of, except Mr. John  
 “ Dennis and your Lordship. A man who  
 “ never wrote a line, in which the religion or  
 “ government of his country, the royal family,  
 “ or their ministry, were disrespectfully men-  
 “ tioned; the animosity of any one party gra-  
 “ tified at the expence of another; nor any  
 “ censure past, but upon known vices, acknow-  
 “ ledged folly, or aggressing impertinence. It is  
 “ with infinite pleasure he finds, that some,  
 “ who seem ashamed and afraid of nothing else,  
 “ are so very sensible of this ridicule; and 'tis  
 “ for that very reason, he resolves, by the grace  
 “ of God, and your Lordship's good leave,

“ That



“ That while he breathes, no rich or noble  
 “ knave

“ Shall walk the world, in credit, to his grave.

“ This he thinks is rendering the best service  
 “ he can to the public, and even to the good  
 “ government of his fellow-creatures. For this,  
 “ at least, he may deserve some commendations  
 “ from the greatest persons in it. Your Lord-  
 “ ship knows of whom I speak———their  
 “ names I should be as sorry, and as much  
 “ ashamed to place near your’s on such an occa-  
 “ sion, as I should to see you, my Lord, placed  
 “ so near their persons, if you could ever make  
 “ so ill an use of their ear, as to asperse or mis-  
 “ represent an innocent man.”

POPE did not think proper to print this letter; nor yet, what is more remarkable, to communicate it to his friend Swift, to whom he excused himself in a letter, sent with his fourth Essay on Man, and his Epistle to Lord Cobham.

“ There is a woman’s war, says he, declared  
 “ against me by a certain Lord; his weapons  
 “ are the same which women and children use,  
 “ a pin to scratch, and a squirt to bespatter. I  
 “ writ a sort of answer, but was ashamed to  
 “ enter the lists with him, and after shewing it  
 “ to some people, suppressed it; otherwise it  
 “ was such, as was worthy of him, and worthy  
 “ of me.” He had before given that friend an account of this affair, and of his own conduct in it as follows: “ That I am an author whose characters  
 “ are



“ are thought of some weight, appears from  
 “ the great noise and bustle, that the court and  
 “ town make about me. I desire your opinion  
 “ as to Lady ——’s and Lord ——’s perfor-  
 “ mance. They are certainly the top wits of  
 “ the court, and you may judge by that single  
 “ piece, what can be done against me, for it  
 “ was laboured, corrected, pre-commended, and  
 “ at last disapproved, so far as to be disowned by  
 “ themselves, after each had highly cried it up  
 “ for the other’s. I have met with some com-  
 “ plaints, and heard at a distance of some threats  
 “ occasioned by my verses. I sent fair messages  
 “ to acquaint them where I was to be found in  
 “ town, and to offer to call at their houses to  
 “ satisfy them; and so it dropped. It is very  
 “ poor in any one to rail and threaten at a dis-  
 “ tance, and have nothing to say to you when  
 “ they see you.”

To this he received a very pleasant and friendly  
 answer, entirely in the character of the facetious  
 Dean : who says,---- “ Give me a shilling, and  
 “ I will insure you that posterity shall never  
 “ know one single enemy, excepting those  
 “ whose memory you have preserved.”

Our poet, however, was not intimidated by  
 the clamours against him, nor discouraged by  
 his friends anxiety for his safety ; as appears by  
 his letter to his friend Dr. Arbuthnot, wherein  
 he makes an apology for the severity of his  
 satire, on account of which, the Doctor, as has  
 before



before been intimated, had gently reprehended him.

“ What you recommend to me with the  
“ solemnity of a last request, shall have its due  
“ weight with me. That disdain and indigna-  
“ tion against vice, is (I thank God) the only  
“ disdain and indignation I have: It is sincere,  
“ and it will be a lasting one. But sure it is as  
“ impossible to have a just abhorrence of vice,  
“ without hating the vicious, as to bear a true  
“ love for virtue, without loving the good.  
“ To reform and not to chastise, I am afraid is  
“ impossible; and that the best precepts, as well  
“ as the best laws, would prove of small use,  
“ if there were no examples to enforce them.  
“ To attack vices in the abstract, without  
“ touching persons, may be safe fighting indeed,  
“ but it is fighting with shadows.

“ As to your kind concern for my safety, I  
“ can guess what occasions it at this time.  
“ Some characters I have drawn are such, that  
“ if there be any who deserve them, 'tis evi-  
“ dently a service to mankind to point those  
“ men out; yet such as, if all the world gave  
“ them, none, I think, will own they take to  
“ themselves. But if they should, those of  
“ whom all the world think in such a manner,  
“ must be men I cannot fear . . . . . I will  
“ consult my safety so far as becomes a prudent  
“ man; but not so far as to omit any thing  
“ which I think becomes an honest one.”

Having



Having thus justified his satire on the principles of reason, he farther proceeds to justify it by the sanction of example.

“ It is certain, much freer satirists than I,  
 “ have enjoyed the encouragement and protec-  
 “ tion of the princes under whom they lived.  
 “ Augustus and Maecenas made Horace their  
 “ companion, though he had been in arms on  
 “ the side of Brutus; and, allow me to remark,  
 “ it was out of the suffering party too, that  
 “ they favoured and distinguished Virgil.  
 “ You will not suspect me of comparing myself  
 “ with Virgil and Horace, nor even with  
 “ another court-favourite, Boileau. I have  
 “ always been too modest to imagine my pane-  
 “ gyrics were incense worthy of a court; and  
 “ that, I hope, will be thought the true reason  
 “ why I never offered any. I would only have  
 “ observed, that it was under the greatest  
 “ princes and best ministers, that moral satirists  
 “ were most encouraged; and that then poets  
 “ exercised the same jurisdiction over the follies,  
 “ as historians did over the vices of men. It  
 “ may also be worth considering, whether  
 “ Augustus himself makes the greater figure,  
 “ in the writings of the former, or of the latter?  
 “ And whether Nero or Domitian do not appear  
 “ as ridiculous for their false taste and affecta-  
 “ tion, in Persius and Juvenal, as odious for  
 “ their bad government in Tacitus and Sueto-  
 “ nius? In the first of these reigns it was,  
 “ that Horace was protected and caressed; and



“ in the latter, that Lucan was put to death,  
 “ and Juvenal banished.”

Our poet, accordingly, persisted in indulging his satirical vein. His second satire is in ridicule of gluttony; and is full of those sprightly turns of thought, and that pleasant raillery, which common readers soonest commit to memory. On a subject of this trivial nature however, we are not to expect many of those beautiful instances of fine poetry, which command the attention of the more elegant and refined. Nevertheless, there is one passage which stands distinguished above the rest, both by the beauty of the sentiment, and of the expression.

Lord Fanny pleading a prerogative to high taste, as suitable to his exalted rank and unwieldy fortune, the poet replies :

“ Then, like the Sun, let Bounty spread her  
 “ ray,

“ And shine that superfluity away.

“ Oh Impudence of wealth ! with all thy store,

“ How dar’st thou let one worthy man be poor?”

This generous and benevolent sentiment is expressed with that warmth and sensibility, that it seizes the heart at once.

Our poet’s *Epistles* in Imitation of Horace, remain next to be considered. In these, with some few exceptions, he has copied all the ease  
 and



and vivacity of the original; and frequently rises above it, by a force and dignity of sentiment and expression, peculiar to himself. In a word, they are so exquisitely performed, that by the best judges, the *Imitation* has been held inimitable, and the copy an original. It is very certain he was the first that struck out this *manner*, and perhaps may be the last that will succeed in it. It had the greatest run of all his works, and was executed with the most ease and rapidity.

In the following instance, however, in his Imitation of Horace's first Epistle, the original seems to have the preference.

" *Nunc itaque et versus, et caetera ludicra*  
     *pono :*

" *Quid verum atque decens, curo et rogo, et*  
     *omnis in hoc sum."*

\* \* \* \* \*

" Farewel then Verse, and Love, and ev'ry Joy,  
 " The Rhymes and Rattles of the Man or Boy;  
 " What right, what true, what fit we justly  
     *call,*  
 " Let this be all my care---for this is All."

In the English the third line is altogether flat and forceless, and there does not seem to be the simplicity and elegance which constitutes the beauty of the Latin. The verbs *curo* and *rogo* express a strong anxiety and solicitude of inquiry concerning the *verum atque decens*, which does



not strike us in the imitation: nor is the *decens* happily expressed in the English.

In the following passage likewise, the copy will perhaps be thought to fall short of the model.

“ *Ac ne forte roges, quo me duce, quo Lare tuter:*  
 “ *Nullius addictus jurare in verba magistri,*  
 “ *Quo me cunque rapit tempestas, deferor hospes.*  
 “ *Nunc agilis fio, et merfor civilibus undis,*  
 “ *Virtutis verae custos, rigidusque satelles:*  
 “ *Nunc in Aristippi furtim praecepta relabor,*  
 “ *Et mihi res, non me rebus, subjungere conor.”*

\* \* \* \* \*

“ But ask not, to what Doctors I apply?  
 “ Sworn to no Master, of no Sect am I:  
 “ As drives the storm, at any door I knock:  
 “ And house with Montagne now, or now with  
 “ Locke.  
 “ Sometimes a Patriot, active in debate,  
 “ Mix with the World, and battle for the  
 “ State,  
 “ Free as young Lyttelton, her Cause pursue,  
 “ Still true to Virtue, and as warm as true:  
 “ Sometimes with Aristippus, or St. Paul,  
 “ Indulge my candor, and grow all to all;  
 “ Back to my native Moderation slide,  
 “ And win my way by yielding to the tide.”

There is a force as well as *Elegance* in the original, which is lost in the imitation; wherein  
 an



an affected levity seems to take place of a graceful ease. The classic reader will observe that there is a great deal of beauty in the phrase, *mersor civilibus undis*, which carries on the Metaphor the poet set out with---*Quo me cunque rapit tempestas*\*: and which is wholly lost in the English. At the same time, it must be confessed that the paraphrase in the concluding lines of the imitation is very beautiful and poetical, and vastly superior to the flatness and poverty of the last line of the original.

The following passage in Horace is very beautiful; and Mr. POPE, as his friend and annotator well observes, rather piques himself in excelling the most finished touches of his original, than in correcting or improving the more inferior parts. In some lines he has happily succeeded in this view; in others, he seems to have fallen short. For instance.

“ *Ut nox longa, quibus mentitur amica; diesque*

“ *Lenta videtur opus debentibus: ut piger*

“ *annus*

“ *Pupillis, quos dura premit custodia matrum:*

“ *Sic mihi tarda fluunt ingrataque tempora, quae*

“ *spem*

“ *Consiliumque morantur agendi gnaviter id,*

“ *quod*

\* In this figure the poet seems to have an eye to his celebrated Ode—

“ *O navis, referent in mare te novi*

“ *Fluctus,*” &c.



“ *Aequæ pauperibus prodest, locupletibus aequæ,  
 “ Aequæ neglectum pueris, senibusque nocebit.*”

\* \* \* \* \*

“ Long, as to him who works for debt, the  
 “ day,  
 “ Long as the Night to her whose Love’s away,  
 “ Long as the Year’s dull circle seems to run,  
 “ When the brisk Minor pants for Twenty-  
 “ one :  
 “ So slow th’ unprofitable moments roll,  
 “ That lock up all the Functions of my soul ;  
 “ That keep me from myself; and still delay  
 “ Life’s instant business to a future day :  
 “ That task, which as we follow, or despise,  
 “ The eldest is a fool, the youngest wise.  
 “ Which done, the poorest can no wants en-  
 “ dure ;  
 “ And which not done, the richest must be  
 “ poor.”

It will perhaps be allowed, that the three first lines of the Latin are not excelled by the imitation : on the contrary, there seems to be more force and propriety in illustrating the length of the night by the instance of a *disappointed lover*, whose *mistress* has *broke her word* with him, than in drawing the illustration from the other sex, to whom it is supposed to be long, *only* because her *love is away*. His *absence* alone, without the idea of *disappointment*, does not afford so strong an exemplification of anxiety and impatience. The English is comparatively spiritless and insipid.

Neither



Neither is the illustration of the pupil equally happy in the imitation. It is true, the slow heavy pace of time, and the impatience of the brisk Minor, is strongly marked in the English, but we do not see the cause of that impatience, which is happily expressed in the Latin in these words—*Quos dura premit custodia, &c.*

The remaining lines however, are far exceeded by the imitation, which is abundantly more philosophical and full of sentiment, than the original. There is an inaccuracy however, in the close of the last line but one, which has not escaped the acuteness of the annotator, who observes that it is badly expressed. It may be added, that the badness of the expression arises from its being *equivocal*: For it may as well denote the *impatience of the poor under their wants*, as their *exemption from wants*.

Mr. POPE however again surpasses his original in this beautiful passage.

“ ——— vides, quae maxima credis

“ *Esse mala, exiguum censum, turpemque re-*  
“ *pulsam,*

“ *Quanto devites animi, capitisque labore.*

“ *Impiger extremos curris mercator ad Indos,*

“ *Per mare pauperiem fugiens \*, per saxa, per*  
“ *ignes :*

“ *Ne*

---

\* The learned annotator has justly observed, that though the fourth line of the English has all the spirit, it has not



“ *Ne cures ea, quae stulte miraris et optas,*  
 “ *Discere, et audire, et meliori credere non*  
 “ *vis ?*”

\* \* \* \* \*

“ But to the world no bugbear is so great,  
 “ As want of Figure, and a small Estate.  
 “ To either India see the Merchant fly,  
 “ Scar’d at the spectre of pale Poverty !  
 “ See him, with pains of body, pangs of soul,  
 “ Burn through the Tropic, freeze beneath  
 “ the Pole !  
 “ Wilt thou do nothing for a nobler end,  
 “ Nothing to make Philosophy thy friend ?  
 “ To stop thy foolish views, thy long desires,  
 “ And ease thy heart of all that it admires ?”

Our poet has given a pretty turn to the following line :

“ *Nil conscire sibi, nulla pallescere culpa.*

\* \* \* \* \*

---

all the imagery of the original, where Horace makes Poverty pursue and keep pace with the Miser in his flight.

But it must be allowed that our poet greatly excels the original, in describing the extremes of heat and cold, to which the miser’s dread of want exposes him. It is observable, however, that Mr. POPE has, for the sake of that striking contrast, dropped the idea of danger, which the miser runs into *per saxa* : which, nevertheless, heightens the description in the Latin.

“ True,



“ True, conscious Honour is to feel no sin,  
 “ He’s arm’d without that’s innocent within.”

This has the same spirit and morality, though not strictly the same sense as the original.

The next Epistle addressed to Mr. Murray (now Lord Mansfield) is highly polished. It is indeed, as the annotator well observes, the most finished of all his imitations, and executed *con amore*.

After a familiar and friendly introduction, the poet thus opens the subject of the Epistle with great dignity, and even sublimity, which rises much above the original.

“ *Hunc solem, et stellas, et decedentia certis*  
 “ *Tempora momentis, sunt qui formidine nulla*  
 “ *Imbuti spectent.*”

\* \* \* \* \*

“ This Vault of Air, this congregated Ball,  
 “ Self-center’d Sun \*, and Stars that rise and  
 “ fall,

---

\* The poet here probably copied from a higher original. Perhaps he had in view the following sublime passage in Job, describing the power of the Almighty.

“ He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and  
 “ hangeth the earth upon nothing.”

“ There



- “ There are, my Friend ! whose philosophic  
 “ eyes  
 “ Look through, and trust the Ruler with his  
 “ Skies,  
 “ To him commit the Hour, the Day, the Year,  
 “ And view this dreadful All without a fear.”

In the following lines, the common objects of admiration are ridiculed with all the strength and spirit, though not perhaps with all the ease of the original.

- “ ———— *quid censes, munera terrae ?*  
 “ *Quid, maris extremos Arabas ditantis et In-*  
 “ *dos ?*  
 “ *Ludicra, quid, plausus, et amici dona Qui-*  
 “ *ritis ?*  
 “ *Quo spectanda modo, quo sensu credis et ore ?*”

\* \* \* \* \*

- “ Admire we then what Earth’s low Entrails  
 “ hold,  
 “ Arabian shores, or Indian seas infold ;  
 “ All the mad trade of Fools and Slaves for  
 “ Gold?  
 “ Or Popularity ? or Stars and Strings ?  
 “ The Mob’s applauses, or the gifts of Kings ?  
 “ Say with what eyes we ought at Courts to gaze,  
 “ And pay the Great our homage of Amaze ?”

There is a beauty in Horace’s conclusion, *quo sensu credis* and *ORE*, which the imitation has missed.

The



The passage which immediately follows, however beautiful in the original, seems on the whole to be surpassed by the imitation.

- “ *Qui timet his adversa, fere miratur eodem*  
 “ *Quo cupiens pacto: pavor est utrobique mo-*  
     *lestus:*  
 “ *Improvisa simul species exterret utrumque:*  
 “ *Gaudeat, an doleat; cupiat, metuatne; quid*  
     *ad rem,*  
 “ *Si, quidquid vidit melius pejusve sua spe,*  
 “ *Defixis oculis, animoque et corpore torpet?*  
     *“ Infani sapiens nomen ferat, aequus iniqui;*  
 “ *Ultra quam satis est, virtutem si petat ipsam.”*

\* \* \* \* \*

- “ If weak the pleasure that from these can  
     “ spring,  
 “ The fear to want them is as weak a thing:  
 “ Whether we dread, or whether we desire,  
 “ In either case, believe me, we admire;  
 “ Whether we joy or grieve, the same the  
     “ curse,  
 “ Surpriz’d at better, or surpriz’d at worse.  
 “ Thus good or bad, to one extreme betray  
 “ Th’ unbalanc’d Mind, and snatch the Man  
     “ away;  
 “ For Virtue’s self may too much zeal be had;  
 “ The worst of Madmen is a Saint run mad.”

But with what skill has the poet improved the following passage into an elegant compliment on his friend!

“ ——— cum



“ ————— *cum bene notum*  
 “ *Porticus Agrippae, et via te conspexerit*  
   “ *Appi;*  
 “ *Ire tamen restat, Numa quo devenit et Ancus.*”

\* \* \* \* \*

“ Grac’d as thou art, with all the Pow’r of  
   “ Words,  
 “ So known, so honour’d, *at the House of*  
   “ *Lords:* \*  
 “ Conspicuous Scene! another yet is nigh,  
 “ (More silent far) where Kings and Poets lie;  
 “ Where Murray (long enough his Country’s  
   “ pride)  
 “ Shall be no more than TULLY, or than  
   “ HYDE!”

What a pity it is, that in a compliment so finely turned, and so justly due, an equal elegance and dignity, should not be preserved throughout! And yet the close of the second line is so wretchedly flat, that one would almost suspect that Blackmore, in POPE’s absence, had stolen his pen, and finished the line in the true spirit of the Bathos. In order to have supported the dignity of the verse, the poet should

---

\* How would our poet have been delighted, had he lived to have seen his friend, who then shone so conspicuously at the bar of that house, become the brightest ornament within it! To have seen him with steady, uniform virtue, guard the constitution, under every administration, against the fatal extremes of invading licentiousness, and encroaching prerogative!



have mentioned that august assembly with a periphrasis.

The imitation of the following passage, seems to fall short of the original.

—————“ *Vis recte vivere? Quis non?*  
 “ *Si virtus hoc una potest dare, fortis omittis*  
 “ *Hoc age deliciis.*” —————

\* \* \* \* \*

“ Would ye be blest? despise low Joys, low  
 “ Gains,  
 “ Disdain whatever CORNBURY \* disdains;  
 “ Be virtuous, and be happy for your pains.” }

This is by no means so strong and pointed as the original. It does not give us the idea of the *virtus* UNA. Nor is the opposition marked by the word *deliciis*, expressed in the imitation with equal force, and elegance.

The following lines, however, are finely paraphrased.

---

\* When Lord Cornbury returned from his travels, his brother-in-law, the late Earl of Essex, told him he had got a pension for him, which was in truth a handsome one, and fit for a man of his rank. But Lord Cornbury answered, with a composed dignity—“ How could you tell, my Lord, “ that I was to be sold; or at least, how came you to know “ my price so exactly.”

“ *Mille*



“ *Mille talenta rotundentur, totidem altera,*  
 “ *porro et*  
 “ *Tertia succedant, et quae pars quadret acer-*  
 “ *vum.*”

\* \* \* \* \*

“ Is Wealth thy passion ? Hence from Pole to  
 “ Pole,  
 “ Where winds can carry, or where waves  
 “ can roll,  
 “ For Indian spices, for Peruvian Gold,  
 “ Prevent the greedy, and out-bid the bold :  
 “ Advance thy golden Mountain to the skies ;  
 “ On the broad base of Fifty Thousand rise,  
 “ Add one round hundred, and (if that’s not  
 “ fair)  
 “ Add fifty more, and bring it to a square.”

The pleasantry of the original is partly lost,  
 and partly improved, in the next passage.

“ *Si fortunatum species et gratia praestat,*  
 “ *Mercemur servum, qui dicet nomina, laevum*  
 “ *Qui fodicet latus, et cogat trans pondera dex-*  
 “ *tram*  
 “ *Porrigere : Hic multum in Fabia valet, ille*  
 “ *Velina :*  
 “ *Cui libet, is fasces dabit ; eripietque curule,*  
 “ *Cui volet, importunus ebur : Frater, Pater,*  
 “ *adde :*  
 “ *Ut cuique est aetas, ita quemque facetus*  
 “ *adoptat.*”

“ But



\* \* \* \* \*

" But if to Pow'r and Place your passion lie,  
 " If in the Pomp of Life consist the joy;  
 " Then hire a Slave, or (if you will) a Lord  
 " To do the Honours, and to give the Word;  
 " Tell at your Levee, as the Crouds approach,  
 " To whom to nod, whom take into your  
     " Coach,  
 " Whom honour with your hand: to make  
     " remarks  
 " Who rules in Cornwall, or who rules in  
     " Berks:  
 " This may be troublesome, is near the Chair:  
 " That makes three Members, this can chuse  
     " a May'r."  
 " Instructed thus, you bow, embrace, protest,  
 " Adopt him Son, or Cousin at the least,  
 " Then turn about, and laugh at your own  
     " jest."

In the first part, we lose the humour of *laevum qui fodicet latus*, &c. but towards the latter end, the ridicule is happily modernized, and facetiously applied.

The imitation of the first Epistle of the second Book of Horace is truly excellent; and though the shining passages may not be so numerous as in the foregoing Epistle; yet such as strike us, are very splendid, and much superior to the original: more especially where poetry is the subject.

Speak-



Speaking of the works of the mob of gentlemen who wrote with ease——

*“ Inter quae verbum emicuit si forte decorum,  
 “ Si versus paulo concinnior unus et alter ;  
 “ Injuste totum ducit venitque poema.”*

Our poet improves the passage thus,—

*“ One Simile, that solitary shines  
 “ In the dry desert of a thousand lines,  
 “ Or lengthen’d Thought that gleams through  
 “ many a page,  
 “ Has sanctify’d whole poems for an age.”*

But the poet’s excellence is perhaps no where more conspicuous than in the instance which follows.

*“ Ut primum positis nugari Graecia bellis  
 “ Coepit, et in vitium fortuna labier aequa ;  
 “ Nunc athletarum studiis, nunc arsit equorum.  
 “ Marmoris aut eboris fabros aut aeris amavit ;  
 “ Suspendit picta vultum mentemque tabella ;  
 “ Nunc tibicinibus, nunc est gavisâ tragoedis :”*

\* \* \* \* \*

*“ In Days of Ease, when now the weary Sword  
 “ Was sheath’d, and Luxury with Charles  
 “ restor’d ;  
 “ In ev’ry taste of foreign Courts improv’d,  
 “ All, by the King’s Example, liv’d and lov’d.  
 “ Then*



" Then Peers grew proud in Horsemanship  
 " t' excell,  
 " New-market's Glory rose, as Britain's fell;  
 " The Soldier breath'd the Gallantries of France,  
 " And ev'ry flow'ry Courtier writ Romance.  
 " Then Marble, soften'd into life, grew warm;  
 " And yielding Metal flow'd to human form :  
 " Lely on animated Canvas stole  
 " The sleepy Eye, that spoke the melting soul.  
 " No wonder then, when all was Love and  
 " Sport,  
 " The willing Muses were debauch'd at Court :  
 " On each enervate string they taught the  
 " note  
 " To pant, or tremble through an Eunuch's  
 " throat."

This paraphrase, is not only far beyond the original, but it is perhaps equal to some of our author's most admired lines.

Admirably, however, as he has here reprehended the depraved taste of those times, he is not less happy in commending the examples of refinement.

*" Torquet ab obscœnis jam nunc sermonibus*  
*" aurem ;*  
*" Mox etiam pectus praeceptis format amicis,*  
*" Asperitatis, et invidiae corrector, et irae ;"*

\* \* \* \* \*

" ————— In all Charles's days,  
 " Roscommon only boasts unspotted bays ;  
 Z " And



“ And in our own (excuse some Courtly stains)  
 “ No whiter page than Addison remains.  
 “ He, from the taste obscene reclaims our  
     “ youth,  
 “ And sets the Passions on the side of Truth,  
 “ Forms the soft bosom with the gentlest art,  
 “ And pours each human Virtue in the heart.”

These lines are beautifully paraphrased. What an elegant compliment has he paid to Mr. Addison, and how gently has he reprehended the servility of his courtly adulation!

The following passage describing the danger of attempting theatrical composition is on the whole much superior to the original.

“ *Quem tulit ad scenam ventoso gloria curru,*  
 “ *Exanimat lentus spectator, sedulus inflat :*  
 “ *Sic leve, sic parvum est, animum quod laudis*  
     “ *avarum*  
 “ *Subruit, ac reficit : valeat res ludicra, si me*  
 “ *Palma negata macrum, donata reducit op-*  
     “ *timum.*”

\* \* \* \* \*

“ O you ! whom Vanity’s light bark conveys \*  
 “ On Fame’s mad voyage by the wind of  
     “ praise,

---

\* The annotator has well observed, that this metaphor, though very fine, is inferior to *ventoso gloria curru*, which has a happy air of ridicule, heightened by its allusion to the Roman triumph.

“ With



“ With what a shifting gale your course you  
 “ ply,  
 “ For ever sunk too low, or borne too high !  
 “ Who pants for glory finds but short repose,  
 “ A breath revives him, or a breath o’er-  
 “ throws.  
 “ Farewell the stage ! if just as thrives the play,  
 “ The silly bard grows fat, or falls away.”

These lines are very fine : yet the close of the last but one is rather flat, and by no means conveys the spirit and beauty of *Palma negata*.

The imitation of the second Epistle of the second Book of Horace, is quite in the familiar strain, and in general has all the ease of the original, but contains few of those more striking beauties which claim distinguished notice.

The following humorous description of a book-worm, however, has too much merit to be passed over in silence.

“ *Ingenium, sibi quod vacuas defumfit Athenas,*  
 “ *Et studiis annos septem dedit, insenuitque*  
 “ *Libris et curis, statua taciturnius exit*  
 “ *Plerumque, et risu populum quatit :’*”

\* \* \* \* \*

“ The Man, who stretch’d in Isis’ calm retreat,  
 “ To books and study gives sev’n years com-  
 “ pleat,



- " See ! strow'd with learned dust, his night-  
     " cap on,  
 " He walks, an object new beneath the sun !  
 " The boys flock round him, and the people }  
     " stare :  
 " So stiff, so mute ! some statue you would }  
     " swear,  
 " Stept from its pedestal to take the air ! " }

The learned critic will observe that the idea describing the effects of his hard study, which is expressed with great strength and beauty in the Latin, by *insenuitque libris et curis*, is wholly dropped in the imitation ; but in return, the ridicule in the words *statua taciturnius exit*, is highly improved by the imitator.

The ridicule is farther carried on, and the affected gravity of some of the men of the long robe, is pleasantly rallied in the characters of two serjeants—

- " Each had a gravity would make you split,  
 " And shook his head at MURRAY \*, as a  
     " wit."

There

---

\* It was a long time before the eminent person here mentioned, could triumph over a ridiculous prejudice which led the public to conclude, that a man of genius and vivacity could not be a profound lawyer. At length, however, he has happily convinced the world, that the two characters are not incompatible. Bacon was not so happy. The blemishes in his moral character, disabled him from stemming and



There is a peculiar ease and jocularly like-  
wise in the imitation of the following lines,  
though our author has made free with the sense  
of the original.

*“Quanto cum fastu, quanto molimine circum-  
spectemus vacuam Romanis vatibus aedem.”*

\* \* \* \* \*

“Lord! how we strut through Merlin’s Cave,  
“to see  
“No Poets there, but Stephen \*, you, and me.”  
Our

and subduing an inveterate and over-bearing prejudice.—  
Indeed the world was ever unwilling to allow any man to  
excell in more than one accomplishment. This springs  
from envy universally. As for the judgment itself, when  
particularly applied, it is sometimes true, and sometimes  
false. Thus, for instance, when the public would not  
allow the great lawyer Coke, to be a classic and a wit like-  
wise (of which he had given so many delectable specimens)  
they were perhaps in the right; but when they assumed,  
though they spoke by the organ of Queen Elizabeth herself,  
that though Bacon was a great Philosopher, yet he was no  
Lawyer, they were certainly as much in the wrong.

\* Mr. *Stephen Duck*, was a modest and worthy man, who  
had the honour (which many who thought themselves his  
betters in poetry had not) of being esteemed by Mr. POPE.

The Queen, who moderated in a sovereign manner be-  
tween two great philosophers, Clarke and Leibnitz, in the  
most profound and sublime points in metaphysics and natural  
philosophy, chose for her favourite *Poet* this Stephen Duck,  
then a thresher. She thought his poetry excellent, and sent



Our poet's versification of Dr. Donne's \* second and fourth satires, which remain next to be

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the manuscript to Mr. POPE for his judgment, having first required his word of honour that he would not unstitch the two first leaves, which she had sewed down to conceal the name of the author. He soon discovered the condition of the poet by the quality of the poetry, and told the Lady who brought it to him, that he supposed most villages could supply verses of the same force. But being told who the writer was, and receiving a fair character of his modesty and innocence, he generously did all he could to establish him at court; and had the condescension and humility frequently to call of him at Richmond.

\* The wit, the vigour, and the honesty of Mr. POPE's satiric writing, had raised a great clamour against him, as if this *Supplement*, as he calls it, to the *public Laws*, was a violation of the rules of morality and society. In answer to this ignorant and prejudiced complaint, it was his purpose to shew, that two of the most respectable characters in the modest and virtuous age of Elizabeth, Dr. Donne and Bishop Hall, had both arraigned vice publicly, and painted it in stronger colours

(Whether they found it  
On the Pillory or near the Throne)

than he had done. In pursuance of this purpose, he admirably *versified*, as he called it, two or three satires of Donne, who with all his wit and strong sense could not *versify*. He intended to have given two or three of *Hall's* likewise, whose force and classical elegance he much admired; but as Hall was a better versifier, and being a mere academic, had not his vein vitiated like Donne's, by living in courts and at large, Mr. POPE's purpose here was only to correct and smooth the versification. In the first edition of these satires which was in Mr. POPE's library, we find that long satire, called the First of the Sixth Book, entirely corrected, and the



be considered, afford a striking proof how much the force of sentiment depends on the power of expression. There are some indelicacies however, in the versification of the second satire, which Mr. POPE's chaster pen might, nay ought to, have corrected. But in the next satire, our author makes us amends by the following invocation, which is admirably sublime.

" Bear me, some God ! oh quickly bear me  
" hence

" To wholesome Solitude, the nurse of Sense :

" Where Contemplation prunes her ruffled  
" wings †,

" And the free soul looks down to pity  
" Kings !"

In

the versification mended, to fit it for his use. He intitles it, in the beginning of his corrections, by the name of *Sat. opt.* — This author, Hall, had a severe examiner of his wit and reasoning in our famous Milton. For Hall, a little before the unhappy breach between Charles the 1st and his long parliament, had written in defence of Episcopacy, when Milton set up for the advocate of Presbytery, and took Hall's defence to task. As Milton gave no quarter to his adversaries, from the Bishop's theologic writings, he fell upon his *Satires*. But a stronger proof cannot be given of their superior excellence, than Milton's being unable to find in them any thing to cavil at, except the title of his three first books of satires, which the author, ridiculously enough, calls TOOTHLESS SATIRES : and this, for want of better hold, Milton sufficiently mumbles.

† Our author here seems to have had Milton in view—

" ————And Wisdom's self

" Oft seeks to sweet retired Solitude,

Z 4

" Where,



In the next lines the poet again displays the becoming pride and dignity of conscious merit.

“ Base Fear becomes the guilty, not the free ;  
 “ Suits Tyrants, Plunderers, but suits not me :  
 “ Shall I, the Terror of this sinful town,  
 “ Care, if a liv’ry’d Lord or smile or frown ?”

Thus our author, notwithstanding the many admonitions of his friends, who were anxious for his safety, continued to wage war against vice and folly, with all the firmness and perseverance of intrepid virtue, till the year 1739.

About that time, he published the Epilogue to his Satires, with a resolution, as the learned editor of his works assures us, to publish no more poems of that kind ; but to enter, by his Epilogue, in the most plain and solemn manner he could, a sort of protest against that insuperable corruption and depravity of manners, which he had unhappily lived to see. Could he have hoped to have amended any, he had continued those attacks ; but bad men were grown so shameful and so powerful, that ridicule was become as unsafe as it was ineffectual \*.

This

---

“ Where, with her best nurse, Contemplation,  
 “ She plumes her feathers, and lets grow her wings,  
 “ That in the various bustle of resort,  
 “ Were all too ruffl’d, and sometimes impair’d.”

\* That our author laboured with an honest zeal to reform the corruption of morals, and that he sincerely bewailed that  
 deprava-



This Epilogue is divided into two dialogues, and contains an apology for the severity of his satires. It is, indeed, a kind of recapitulation of his satirical pieces. Most of the characters whom he had lashed before, here receive the parting scourge: on the other hand, he pays the last tribute of praise, to several whose virtues he had before applauded. In short, in this epilogue, he vindicates the justice of his writings, alledging that, whether he censured or commended, his pen was guided by truth and virtue.

The spirit of the following lines is admirable.

---

depravity which he at length despaired of correcting, is evident from many of his familiar letters, more especially from one to Mr. Allen, wherein he says——

“ I have two great tasks on my hands ; I am trying to  
 “ benefit myself, and to benefit posterity ; not by works of  
 “ my own, God knows : I can but skirmish, and maintain  
 “ a flying fight with vice ; its forces augment, and will drive  
 “ me off the stage, before I shall see the effects complete,  
 “ either of divine providence or vengeance : For sure we can  
 “ be quite saved only by the one, or punished by the other :  
 “ the condition of morality is so desperate, as to be above  
 “ all human hands.”

In another letter to the same gentleman, after having asked his advice about printing some letters, he adds——

“ I am sure, if you thought they would be of any service  
 “ to virtue, or answer any one good purpose, whether (con-  
 “ sidered as writings) they brought me any credit or not,  
 “ they should be given to the world : and let them make me  
 “ a worse writer, provided they could but make one better  
 “ man.”

“ Ask



- " Ask you what Provocation I have had ?  
 " The strong Antipathy of Good to Bad.  
 " When Truth or Virtue an Affront endures,  
 " Th' Affront is mine, my Friend, and should  
     " be yours.  
 " Mine, as a Foe profess'd to false Pretence,  
 " Who think a Coxcomb's Honour like his  
     " Sense ;  
 " Mine, as a Friend to ev'ry worthy Mind ;  
 " And mine as Man, who feel for all Man-  
     " kind."

The poet's conscious pride once more breaks forth with a decent boldness.—

- " Yes I am proud ; I must be proud to see  
 " Men not afraid of God, afraid of me :  
 " Safe from the Bar, the Pulpit, and the  
     " Throne,  
 " Yet touch'd and sham'd by Ridicule alone."

The invocation which follows is truly noble and sublime.

- " O sacred weapon ! left for Truth's defence,  
 " Sole dread of Folly, Vice, and Insolence !  
 " To all but Heav'n-directed hands deny'd,  
 " The Muse may give thee, but the Gods must  
     " guide."

Our author then proceeds to shew, that the most polished flattery of a poet cannot sanctify a bad cause.

" Not



“ Not Waller’s Wreath can hide the Nation’s  
 “ Scar,  
 “ Nor Boileau turn the Feather to a Star.”

This is a delicate reprehension of Boileau’s ridiculous flattery of Louis the Fourteenth.

On the other hand, by way of contrast, our author shews the power of verse to immortalize the good.

“ Not so, when diadem’d with rays divine,  
 “ Touch’d with the Flame that breaks from  
 “ Virtue’s thrine,  
 “ Her Priestess Muse forbids the Good to die,  
 “ And opes the Temple of Eternity.”

\* \* \* \* \*

“ Let Envy howl, while Heav’n’s whole Chorus  
 “ sings,  
 “ And bark at Honour not conferr’d by Kings\*;  
 “ Let Flatt’ry sick’ning see the Incense rise,  
 “ Sweet to the World, and grateful to the Skies:  
 “ Truth guards the Poet, sanctifies the line,  
 “ And makes immortal, Verse as mean as  
 “ mine.”

---

\* The lawyers tell us, that Kings are the fountains of honour; but Mr. POPE was of a different opinion. In one of his letters to Mr. Allen he says,—“ Though they call Kings the fountains of honour, I think them only the bestowers of titles.” Whatever the lawyers may say, all philosophers will be of Mr. POPE’s mind.



Good sense and fine poetry are happily displayed in these prophetic lines. His verse is indeed immortal. He has consigned many worthless characters to perpetual infamy, whose vices and follies might otherwise have died with their names; and he has preserved the fame of the worthy, from being buried in the tomb of oblivion.

The poem raised him, as he knew it would, some enemies; but he had reason to be satisfied with the approbation of good men, and the testimony of his own conscience.

This volume closes with a copy of verses addressed to Lady Frances Shirley, on her presenting our author with a standish, together with a steel and golden pen.

In order to enter into the spirit of these lines, it is necessary to premise that Mr. POPE was threatened to be prosecuted in the House of Lords for the two foregoing poems, that is, the epilogue to the satires. On which, with great resentment against his enemies for not distinguishing between——

*“ Grave Epistles bringing vice to light,”*

and licentious libels, he began a third Epilogue, more sublime and severe than the other; which being no secret, matters were compromised. His enemies agreed to drop the prosecution, and he to leave the third Epilogue unfinished and unpublished.



published. This affair occasioned this beautiful poem to Lady Frances, and to this it alludes throughout: more particularly in the following stanzas.

It must first be observed, that the poet, by an ingenious turn of imagination, supposes the golden and steel pen to be *weapons from the sky*, presented to him by the Athenian Queen, descending to him in all her sober charms. The one, a golden lance to guard desert; the other of steel, to stab vice to the heart: which he received on his knees——

“ And dipt them in the fable Well,  
“ The Fount of Fame or Infamy.”

This mistake of the poet's, the Lady thus pleasantly rectifies——

“ What *Well*? what *Weapon*? (Flavia cries)  
“ A standish, steel and golden pen!  
“ It came from Bertrand's (\*), not the skies;  
“ I gave it you to write again.

“ But, Friend, take heed whom you attack;  
“ You'll bring a House (I mean of Peers)  
“ Red, Blue, and Green, nay white and black,  
“ L—— and all about your ears.

(\*) A famous toy-shop at Bath.



“ You’d write as smooth again on glass,  
 “ And run, on ivory, so glib,  
 “ As not to stick at fool or ass <sup>(b)</sup>,  
 “ Nor stop at Flattery or Fib <sup>(c)</sup>.

“ *Athenian Queen*, and *sober charms* !  
 “ I tell ye, fool, there’s nothing in’t :  
 “ ’Tis Venus, Venus gives these arms <sup>(d)</sup> ;  
 “ In Dryden’s Virgil see the print <sup>(e)</sup>.

“ Come, if you’ll be a quiet soul,  
 “ That dares tell neither Truth nor Lies <sup>(f)</sup>,  
 “ I’ll list you in the harmless roll  
 “ Of those that sing of these poor eyes.”

Our bard had now attained what he justly esteemed the greatest felicity in life, the esteem and friendship of men of worth and reputation ; being not less admired for his writings, than carested for his integrity and other social virtues.

Having now gained the summit of Parnassus, he was open to all the trouble and inconvenience

<sup>(b)</sup> The Dunciad.

<sup>(c)</sup> The Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot.

<sup>(d)</sup> Such toys being the usual presents from lovers to their mistresses.

<sup>(e)</sup> When she delivers Eneas a suit of heavenly armour.

<sup>(f)</sup> i. e. If you have neither the courage to write satire, nor the application to attempt an *Epic Poem*.—He was then meditating on such a work.



arising from adulation and envy. His patience was exhausted by the endless impertinence of poetsasters of all ranks and conditions, as well by such as courted his favour, as by those who envied his reputation.

His excelling talents raised a swarm of the latter, who endeavoured to depreciate his literary merit, and asperse his moral character. Our author for a long time bore their impotent attacks with silence and composure, which enabled him to avail himself of the remarks of his enemies, and turn their malice to his profit. At length, however, grown conscious of superior strength, and bearing that detestation of the low invidious arts of bad writers, which every generous mind must entertain; he resolved to get rid of his flatterers and defamers both together, by grouping them all into one piece, called the *Dunciad*, which he had long meditated, and which was first published in the year 1727.

But to tell of his quarrels with every unworthy adversary, would be like describing the various annoyances that Hercules encountered in wading through the fens of Lerna, from every snake, and toad, and beetle, which he brushed off with his club. Let it suffice to say, that by the *Dunciad* he totally subdued that many-headed monster that had long annoyed him with its hissings.

When Mr. POPE, together with his friend the Dean, (for reasons specified in the preface to their *Miscellanies*) determined to own the most trifling



trifling pieces in which they had any concern; and to destroy all that remained in their power; the first sketch of this poem was snatched from the fire by Dean Swift, who persuaded his friend to proceed in it, and to him therefore it was inscribed.

But what forwarded the publication of this piece, was the Treatise of the *Bathos*, or *Art of sinking in Poetry*, published in the Miscellanies above spoken of. In this treatise was a chapter wherein the species of bad writers were ranged in classes, and initial letters of names prefixed, for the most part at random. But such was the number of poets eminent in that art, that some or other took every letter to himself.

Among others, the late Mr. *Aaron Hill*, who was a poet, not altogether devoid of poetical merit, suspected himself to be marked out by the letters A. H. This misunderstanding provoked him to write to Mr. POPE, in terms of the warmest expostulation. Several letters passed between them on this occasion, which were afterward published. Six of them have been thought particularly worth preserving: the reader will find them in the Appendix, No. 1. and from thence may learn on what grounds Mr. Hill's misapprehension was founded.

Mr. POPE, with good reason, lamented how much he had suffered from his acquaintance with the inferior tribe of contemporary poets. He never was more serious than when he said,

“ Much



“ Much do I suffer, much, to keep in peace  
 “ This jealous, waspish, wrong-head rhyming  
 “ race.”

The best commentary on these two lines, is comprehended in those very fine and humane letters in the Appendix, written to that wrong-headed man Mr. Aaron Hill. This writer, who, as has been intimated, did not want genius, though it was always faced, and even lined through with fustian, in the midst of a familiar acquaintance with Mr. POPE, and under obligations to him, in a fit of jealousy, for something or other, very seriously abused him in print; he had no sooner done this than he repented, and asked pardon, which as soon as he had obtained, he offended in like manner again, and so went on insulting and repenting to the end of the chapter. He thought himself a very formidable rival to our poet; this made him expect the observance and court due to such an one. The several marks of friendship he had received from our poet went for nothing: For nature never yet put one grain of generosity or gratitude into the composition of a coxcomb.

In short, all the lesser writers fell into so violent a fury, that for half a year or more, the common news papers, in most of which they had some property, as being hired writers, were filled with the most abusive falsehoods and scurrilities they could possibly devise. A liberty not to be wondered at in those who for many years had aspersed most of the characters of the age;



and this with impunity, their own persons and names being to most, utterly secret and obscure.

This induced Mr. POPE to think that he had now some opportunity of doing good, by detecting and dragging into light, these common enemies of mankind: since to invalidate their slander, it was sufficient to shew what contemptible men were the authors of it. This it was which gave birth to the DUNCIAD; and our poet thought it a happiness, that by the late flood of slander on himself, he had acquired such a peculiar right over their names, as was necessary to his purpose.

Soon after he had formed this design, he communicated it to his excellent friend Dr. Arbuthnot; who, though as a man of wit and learning, he might not have been displeased to see their common injuries revenged on this pernicious tribe; yet as our author's friend and physician, being solicitous for his ease and health, he was unwilling he should provoke so large and powerful a party.

Their difference of opinion in this matter, gives occasion for the colloquial epistle\* to the Doctor,

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\* It is proper to observe, that this Epistle, though not finished till 1733, was begun many years before, as our author assures us in his advertisement prefixed to it; and as it alludes to the DUNCIAD, it was thought proper to mention it at this place, though out of the chronological order  
of



Doctor, which is a kind of Prologue to the Satires in imitation of Horace, above taken notice of. In this prologue, our author, in a natural and familiar detail of all his provocations, both from flatterers and slanderers, has artfully interwoven an apology for his *moral* and *poetical* character.

Of this epistle, the learned editor of Mr. POPE's works, has given a very accurate analysis, to which I refer the curious reader; and shall only take notice of such parts as tend to vindicate Mr. POPE and his writings: taking occasion by the way to point out some of the most distinguished beauties of this excellent epistle.

Our poet having told his case, and humorously applied to his physician, in the manner one would ask for a recipe to kill vermin, he proceeds in the common character of such as ask advice, to acquaint his Doctor that he had

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of his publications. In this advertisement Mr. POPE farther assures us, that he had no thoughts of publishing it, till it pleased some persons of rank and fortune, to attack in a very extraordinary manner, not only his writings, of which being public, the public was judge, but his person, morals, and family. Being divided between the necessity of saying something of *himself*, and his laziness to undertake so awkward a task, he thought it the shortest way to put the last hand to this epistle. He adds with becoming spirit, that if it has any thing pleasing, it will be that by which he is most desirous to please, the *truth* and the *sentiment*; and if any thing offensive, it will be only to those he is least sorry to offend, the *vicious* and *ungenerous*.



already formed his resolution, and determined of his remedy. But, by way of preamble, he introduces a simile from the story of Midas, in which, taking occasion to mention kings, queens, and ministers of state, his friend takes the alarm, and begs of him to forbear; advising him to stick to his subject, and be easy under so common a calamity. To make light of his suffering provokes the poet; he breaks the thread of his discourse, and abruptly tells him the application of his simile.

“ Out with it, DUNCIAD ! let the Secret pass,  
“ &c.”

His friend, however, persisting to advise him against such a general attack, the poet replies, that considering the strong antipathy of bad to good, there will always be enemies either open or secret; and that it admits of no question, but a slanderer is less hurtful than a flatterer: for, says he, in a pleasant simile, alluding to his friend's profession.

“ Of all mad creatures, if the learn'd are right,  
“ It is the Slaver kills, and not the Bite.”

He then proceeds to ridicule the abject and extravagant flattery of those sycophants, who complimented him even for his infirmities, his bad health, and his inconvenient shape. There is so much spirit and poignance in his reprehension of this servile adulation, that I cannot resist the pleasure of transcribing the lines.

“ There



" There are who to my Person pay their court,  
 " I cough like *Horace*; and though lean, am  
     " short:  
 " *Ammon*'s great son, one shoulder had too  
     " high,  
 " Such *Ovid*'s nose, and, Sir, you have an  
     " eye.  
 " Go on, obliging creatures, make me see  
 " All that disgrac'd my betters, meet in me :  
 " Say for my comfort, languishing in bed,  
 " Just so immortal *Maro* held his head."

With the same spirit and keen ridicule, he exposes his critics and calumniators; wherein he introduces that inimitable character of Atticus already spoken of: and then struck with the sense of that dignity and felicity inseparable from the character of a true poet, he breaks out into a passionate vow for the continuance of the full liberty attendant on it: and concludes his wish with a description of his temper and disposition, which was such, that he would even execrate his best vein of poetry, if made at the expence of truth and innocence.

" Curst be the verse, how well foe'er it flow,  
 " That tends to make one worthy Man my  
     " foe,  
 " Give Virtue scandal, Innocence a fear,  
 " Or from the soft-ey'd Virgin steal a tear."

Such a noble generosity and amiable tenderness of sentiment seems to have flowed warm from the heart, and perhaps could not have been



expressed with such feeling and energy by the mere efforts of genius alone.

Our poet then professes that the sole object of his resentment was vice and baseness, and proceeds to satirize one under the character of Sporus, who had wantonly injured him in the most sensible manner.

This moving him with fresh indignation at his slanderers, he takes the advice of Horace, *sume superbiam quæsitam meritis*, and draws a fine picture of his moral and literary conduct through life: in which he shews that not *Fame*, but VIRTUE, which he welcomes in a strain of divine enthusiasm, was the constant object of his ambition. At the same time, he boldly acknowledges, that in his pursuit of vice, he rarely considered how knavery was circumstanced; but followed it with his vengeance, indifferently; whether it led to the pillory, or the drawing room.

But lest this should convey the idea of a savage virtue, he instances some particulars which prove him of so easy a nature, as to be *duped by the slenderest appearances*; and withal that he was so forbearing, as not only to have been silent during a long course of calumny on himself, but even to have restrained his resentment under the most shocking of all provocations, *abuses on his father and mother*.

This



This naturally leads him to give a short account of their births, fortunes and dispositions; which ends with the tenderest wishes for the happiness of his friend; intermixed with the most pathetic description of that filial piety, in the exercise of which he makes his own happiness to consist.

“ Oh friend! may each domestic bliss be  
“ thine!

“ Be no unpleasing melancholy mine:

“ Me, let the tender office long engage,

“ To rock the cradle of reposing age,

“ With lenient arts extend a Mother’s breath,

“ Make languor smile, and smooth the bed of  
“ death,

“ Explore the thought, explain the asking  
“ eye,

“ And keep a-while one parent from the

“ sky \*!”

Had our author penned no other than these exquisite lines, they would of themselves be sufficient to establish his character as an excellent poet, and an amiable man.

Mr. POPE, as appears by this Epistle, being thus superior to all apprehensions from the resentment of the worthless tribe whom he grouped in the *Dunciad*, at length convinced them

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\* In a very few weeks after this poem was published, that is, in the year 1733, our author’s mother died, aged 93. His father, as has been observed, having died in 1717.



that the most gentle and forbearing tempers, when strongly urged, are the most poignant and severe.

But though our poet treated bad writers and bad men with becoming severity, yet no one ever praised the good of all denominations with more sincere and heart-felt pleasure. Even in this *Dunciad*, he has celebrated Mr. Locke, Sir Isaac Newton, Dr. Barrow, Dr. Atterbury, Mr. Dryden, Mr. Congreve, Dr. Garth, Mr. Addison, and in short almost every man of his time who deserved it. Nay, so amiable is his impartiality, that Cibber himself, the hero of the piece, has his share of commendation, on the presumption of his being the author of the *Careless Husband*. It was difficult to find the pleasure of applauding merit in a poem on such a subject, yet he has contrived to insert such a panegyrick, and has made even Dulness out of her own mouth pronounce it.

The *Dunciad* has been generally esteemed among Mr. POPE's most admired pieces, and it is in truth a most admirable pattern for satirical composition; but the satire being confined and personal, some of its most capital excellencies are now but faintly relished. It is to be regretted therefore, that so much good sense and excellent morality should be intermixed with a transient satire on private characters, many of them so insignificant, that their names would never have been public, had they not found a place in the

*Dunciad*,



*Dunciad*, and of whom the most distinguished now sleep in oblivion.

This piece being of the mock epic kind, preserves all the dignity peculiar to that species of composition, and is penned in strict conformity to the rules observed by the great epic writers in their sublimer pieces. It is divided into four books, and the first opens with an affected solemnity in the Maronian strain.

“The Mighty Mother, and her Son, who  
 “brings  
 “The Smithfield Muses to the ear of Kings,  
 “I sing.”——

The subject being proposed, to preserve the mock majesty of the piece, a solemn invocation ensues: and at length the college of dulness is described, where the goddess sits enthroned in clouded majesty, contemplating the wild and monstrous creation to which she had given birth.

Our poet here ridicules the gross absurdities and inconsistencies in the productions of the sons of Dulness, with such pleasant raillery and exquisite poignance, that the length of the following quotation needs no apology.

“Here she beholds the Chaos dark and deep,  
 “Where nameless Somethings in their causes  
 “sleep,  
 “Till genial Jacob, or a warm Third day,  
 “Call forth each mass, a Poem, or a Play:  
 “How



- "How hints, like spawn, scarce quick in  
 "embryo lie,  
 "How new-born nonsense first is taught to cry,  
 "Maggots half-form'd in rhyme exactly meet,  
 "And learn to crawl upon poetic feet.  
 "Here one poor word an hundred clenches  
 "makes,  
 "And ductile dulness new meanders takes;  
 "There motley images her fancy strike,  
 "Figures ill pair'd, and Similes unlike.  
 "She sees a mob of Metaphors advance,  
 "Pleas'd with the madness of the mazy dance;  
 "How Tragedy and Comedy embrace;  
 "How Farce and Epic get a jumbled race;  
 "How Time himself stands still at her com-  
 "mand,  
 "Realms shift their place, and Ocean turns to  
 "land.  
 "Here gay Description Egypt glads with  
 show'rs,  
 "Or gives to Zembla fruits, to Barca flow'rs;  
 "Glitt'ring with ice here hoary hills are seen,  
 "There painted vallies of eternal green,  
 "In cold December fragrant chaplets blow,  
 "And heavy harvests nod beneath the snow."

The goddess is then introduced on the evening of a Lord Mayor's Festival, when——

- "All hush'd and satiate lay,  
 "Yet eat, in dreams, the custard of the day;  
 "While pensive Poets painful vigils keep,  
 "Sleepless themselves to give their readers  
 "sleep."

During



During this still and lethargic period, she revolves in her mind, with parental joy, the long succession of her sons, but chiefly, and with peculiar delight, fixes her attention on *Bays*, the hero of the piece. He is described, after an ill run at play, and the ill success of a dramatic piece, sitting in his study in deep despair. There is a great deal of keen raillery in this description.

- " Swearing and supperless the Hero sate,  
 " Blasphem'd his Gods, the Dice, and damn'd  
   " his Fate.  
 " Then gnaw'd his Pen, then dash'd it on the  
   " ground,  
 " Sinking from thought to thought, a vast  
   " profound!  
 " Plung'd for his sense, but found no bottom  
   " there,  
 " Yet wrote and flounder'd on, in mere de-  
   " spair."

Full of apprehensions, lest the empire of dulness was drawing to a period, he ponders with himself what course to follow, whether to betake himself to the church, to gaming, or to party writing. In this state of uncertainty and despondence, casting a mournful look on his library, and erecting a pile of dull books, into a kind of altar, he solemnly invokes the goddess.

- " Then he: Great Tamer of all human art!  
 " First in my care, and ever at my heart;  
   " Dul-



- “ *Dulness ! whose good old cause I yet defend,*  
 “ With whom my Muse began, with whom  
     “ shall end,  
 “ E’er since Sir Fopling’s Periwig was Praise,  
 “ To the last honours of the Butt and Bays :  
 “ O thou ! of bus’ness the directing soul !  
 “ To this our head like byass to the bowl,  
 “ Which, as more pond’rous, made its aim  
     “ more true,  
 “ Obliquely wadling to the mark in view :  
 “ O ! ever gracious to perplex’d mankind,  
 “ Still spread a healing mist before the mind ;  
 “ And, lest we err by Wit’s wild dancing light,  
 “ Secure us kindly in our native night.  
 “ Or, if to Wit a Coxcomb make pretence,  
 “ Guard the sure barrier between that and  
     “ Sense ;  
 “ Or quite unravel all the reas’ning thread,  
 “ And hang some curious cobweb in its stead !  
 “ As, forc’d from wind-guns, lead itself can  
     “ fly,  
 “ And pond’rous flugs cut swiftly through the  
     “ sky ;  
 “ As clocks to weight their nimble motion  
     “ owe,  
 “ The wheels above urg’d by the load below :  
 “ Me Emptiness, and Dulness could inspire,  
 “ And were my Elasticity, and Fire.  
 “ Some Daemon stole my pen (forgive th’  
     “ offence)  
 “ And once betray’d me into common sense.”

There is certainly a great deal of wit and admirable raillery in these lines ; but in the opinion of some, it has been thought to wound proba-



probability too much to make the hero the worshipper and champion of Dulness, in her proper person, without the least disguise. The author of the *Elements of Criticism*, among others, professes himself of this sentiment:—"Dulness, says he, may be imagined a Deity or Idol to be worshipped by bad writers, but then some sort of disguise is requisite, some *bastard virtue* must be bestowed, to give the idol a plausible appearance. Yet in the *Dunciad*, dulness, without the least disguise, is made the object of worship: the mind rejects such a fiction as unnatural; for dulness is a defect of which even the dullest mortal is ashamed."

This writer, however, appears to be mistaken, if he presumes that no *bastard virtue* is in this poem attributed to the goddess.

Is there no *bastard virtue* in the *mighty mother—who brings the Smithfield muses to the ears of Kings*? Starving poetasters would prefer her for this single virtue, to Apollo and the nine muses. Is there no *bastard virtue* in the *peace* of which he makes her the author?

"*The Goddess bid Britannia sleep.*"

Has not the poet celebrated her for her *beauty*?

"Fate---this *fair idiot* gave—"

As also for her *gravity*, her *industry*? The suppliant hero could find great consolation in her *bastard virtues*.



“ O ever *gracious* to *perplex'd* mankind,  
 “ Still spread a *healing mist* before the mind.”

Is not her *pertness* the *bastard virtue* of *wit*?

“ Dulness with transport ey'd the lively dunce,  
 “ Rememb'ring she her self was *pertness*  
 “ once.”

Her delight in games and races is another of her *bastard virtues*, that would captivate her nobler sons, and draw them to her shrine. Not to speak of her indulgence to the young traveller, whom she accompanies in the shape of his Tutor, as Minerva did Telemachus in the shape of Mentor. But of all her *bastard virtues*, her *free-thinking*, the virtue she particularly recommends to her followers in the fourth book, is sufficient to recommend her to general worship.

Yet after all, the poet having made his hero in the passage above transcribed, invoke DULNESS, *eo nomine*, and profess to be her champion, it may be thought, in this instance, to exclude the supposition of his worshipping some *bastard virtue*: and perhaps it would have been less liable to objection, had the poet *here* dropped the attribute of the Deity invoked, and made his hero supplicate the goddesses generally.

The hero, however, after having thus solemnly invoked dulness, turns towards his works, in a tender and passionate apostrophe, and presaging the miserable fate to which they



may be exposed, he determines to commit them to the flames.

- " Go, purify'd by flames ascend the sky,
- " My better and more christian progeny.
- " Unstain'd, untouch'd, and yet in maiden  
    "sheets ;
- " While all your smutty sisters walk the streets."

The poet then, with a peculiar vein of sarcastic humour, still preserving the mock dignity of the piece, describes the several unfortunate pieces expiring in the flames, the light of which rousing the goddess, she snatches the sheet of an unfinished poem, with which she overwhelms the pyre.

The goddess then revealing herself to her darling son, transports him to her temple, and unfolds all her mysteries to his view.

- " Here to her Chosen all her works she shows ;
- " Prose swell'd to verse, verse loit'ring into  
    " prose :
- " How random thoughts now meaning  
    " chance to find,
- " Now leave all memory of sense behind :
- " How Prologues into Prefaces decay,
- " And these to Notes are fritter'd quite away :
- " How Index-learning turns no student pale,
- " Yet holds the eel of science by the tail :
- " How, with less reading than makes felons  
    " 'scape,
- " Less human genius than God gives an ape,
- " Small



- “ Small thanks to France, and none to Rome  
     “ or Greece,  
 “ A past, vamp’d, future, old, reviv’d, new  
     “ piece;  
 “ ’Twixt Plautus, Fletcher, Shakespear and  
     “ Corneille,  
 “ Can make a Cibber, Tibbald, or Ozell.”

The Poet has here artfully contrived to satirize the pretensions of half-learned superficial scriblers, with the keen strokes of the most exquisite ridicule: and having made Dulness display her works to her chosen son, she is then represented anointing his head with the sacred opium; and after muttering some mystic words, she proclaims him successor to the deceased laureat.

The solemnity of his proclamation is graced with the representation of public games and sports of various kinds, in imitation of those in Homer and Virgil; and the description of these games takes up the greater part of the second book.

I will frankly acknowledge, that I could never read this book without disgust. I am ready, nevertheless, to own, that the poet has shewn great address in adapting the several games to the different characters of the competitors, and has displayed a great deal of wit in describing their various merits in the respective exercises. But the grossness, nay the filthiness, of many of



the illustrations cannot fail to nauseate. The language indeed is perfectly chaste and polished, but no elegance or ingenuity in the mode of expression, can atone for an indecency or indecorum in the idea represented.

Thus much, however, may be said in defence of our poet, that in a *Satire*, purposely written to expose vice and folly, the odious representation is part of the scourge which inflicts the punishment; and this is the best and only apology which can be urged in justification of some passages in this book.

The slightest indelicacy, however, deserves a severe reprehension in a genius like Mr. POPE's, since many, who are unable to imitate his excellencies, may be tempted to copy his inelegancies: and we have known some little poetasters, who, having drawn their ideas from the fordes of human nature, have justified themselves on the authority of Mr. POPE, as many have attempted to vindicate him by the example of Homer and Virgil; not adverting to the difference of the ends proposed, which alone can apologize for the indelicacy of the means.

But though writers of superior talents, and directed by noble motives, may preserve, as was said of Virgil, a certain air of majesty in the description of such immundities; yet, when authors of inferior genius attempt to colour impure sentiments with the ornaments of style, they only add awkwardness to obscenity, and become every way offensive.



Mr. POPE used himself to say, that this part of his poem cost him most trouble, and pleased him least. A certain proof that he was doing violence to his nicer feelings, and that, on this occasion, he had lost sight of his own excellent precept,

“ No Pardon vile Obscenity should find,  
 “ Tho’ Wit and Art conspire to move the  
 “ Mind.”

Nevertheless this book is not without its beauties. The last exercise appointed for the critics, which is that of hearing two voluminous authors, one in verse and the other in prose, read without sleeping, is conceived with great propriety and humour, and is admirably described in the following beautiful lines.

“ Three College Sophs, and three pert Temp-  
 “ lars came,  
 “ The same their talents, and their tastes the  
 “ same;  
 “ Each prompt to query, answer, and debate,  
 “ And smit with love of Poesy and Prate.  
 “ The pond’rous books two gentle readers  
 “ bring,  
 “ The heroes sit, the vulgar form a ring.  
 “ The clam’rous croud is hush’d with mugs  
 “ of Mum,  
 “ Till all tun’d equal, send a gen’ral hum.  
 “ Then mount the Clerks, and in one lazy  
 “ tone  
 “ Thro’ the long, heavy, painful page drawl  
 “ on;  
 “ Soft



- "Soft creeping, words on words, the sense  
 "compose,  
 "At ev'ry line they stretch, they yawn, they  
 "doze.  
 "As to soft gales top-heavy pines bow low  
 "Their heads, and lift them as they cease to  
 "blow:  
 "Thus oft they rear, and oft the head de-  
 "cline,  
 "As breathe, or pause, by fits, the airs divine.  
 "And now to this side, now to that they nod,  
 "As verse, or prose, infuse the drowzy God."

The poet has displayed great skill in the composition of these lines, which are sluggish and lethargic, to a degree admirably adapted to describe the drowzy scene they represent. The simile of the Pines likewise is happily imagined, and very poetically expressed.

The audience being all lulled to repose, and disposed in their proper places of rest, the goddess transports the king to her temple, where he is represented slumbering with his head on her lap. Having besprinkled him with Cimmerian dew, which gives birth to a thousand romantic visions, he is at length conveyed on the wings of Fancy, and conducted by a slipshod Sibyl to the Elysian shade, where he meets with the ghost of *Settle*, who leads him to a summit, from whence he shews him the past triumphs of the empire of Dulness, then the present, and lastly the future.



The poet displays great address in this description, which abounds with good sense and poignant reflection. Having first pointed out those parts of the globe where science never rose, he then turns towards the east and south, where she was destroyed by tyranny. In the first, by Chi Ho-am-ti, the famous emperor of China; who built the great wall between that and Tartary, and destroyed all the books, and learned men, of the empire. In the second, by the Caliph, Omar the first, who, having conquered Egypt, caused his General to burn the Ptolemean library; on the gates of which was this inscription, ΨΥΧΗΣ ΙΑΤΡΕΙΟΝ, the Physic of the Soul.

Having thus described the ravages of tyranny, he next pathetically bewails the destruction of science by barbarism and superstition, in the following beautiful and poetical lines.

“ How little, mark ! that portion of the ball,

“ Where, faint at best, the beams of Science  
“ fall :

“ Soon as they dawn, from Hyperborean skies

“ Embodiy’d dark, what clouds of Vandals  
“ rise !

“ Lo ! where Mæotis sleeps, and hardly flows

“ The freezing Tanais thro’ a waste of snows,

“ The North by myriads pours her mighty sons,

“ Great nurse of Goths, of Alans, and of  
“ Huns !

“ See Alaric’s stern port ! the martial frame

“ Of Genferic ! and Attila’s dread name !

“ See



- " See the bold Ostrogoths on Latium fall ;  
 " See the fierce Visigoths on Spain and Gaul !  
 " See, where the morning gilds the palmy  
     " shore  
 " (The foil that arts and infant letters bore)  
 " His conqu'ring tribes th' Arabian prophet  
     " draws,  
 " And saving Ignorance enthrones by Laws.  
 " See Christians, Jews, one heavy sabbath  
     " keep,  
 " And all the *western* world believe and sleep."

The picture likewise which follows of Rome, in her degenerate state, is painted with a bold and masterly pencil.

- " Lo ! Rome herself, proud mistress now no  
     " more  
 " Of arts, but thund'ring against heathen  
     " lore ;  
 " Her grey-hair'd Synods damning books un-  
     " read,  
 " And Bacon trembling for his brazen head.  
 " Padua, with sighs, beholds her Livy burn,  
 " And ev'n th' Antipodes Vigilius mourn.  
 " See, the Cirque falls, th' unpillar'd Temple  
     " nods,  
 " Streets pav'd with Heroes, Tyber choak'd  
     " with Gods :  
 " Till Peter's keys some christ'ned Jove adorn,  
 " And Pan to Moses lends his pagan horn :  
 " See graceless Venus to a Virgin turn'd,  
 " Or Phidias broken, and Apelles burn'd."



Having thus shewn by what means those parts of the globe, which had been enlightened by the beams of science, were reduced to the dominion of Dulness; he next represents a view of Great Britain, and shews by whom, and by what causes, it will be brought under the empire of the goddesses. This affords an occasion to the poet of satirizing the depraved and absurd taste which prevailed, and, I am sorry to add, still prevails, in the theatrical entertainments of this nation. Nothing can be a stronger reflection on modern taste and understanding, than the encouragement which is given to our ridiculous farces and pantomimes, which debase our theatres to mere puppet-shews. Nay, it is not too much to say, that of the two, the character of Punch is less contemptible than that of Harlequin.

Having prophesied that Dulness shall reign over the theatres, and even be advanced at court, he lastly foretells that her sons shall preside in the seats of arts and sciences; giving a glimpse of the future glories of her reign, which are fully displayed in the fourth and last book.

This book is replete with beauties. There is scarce a line but is fraught with good sense, keen satire, and excellent morality, embellished with all the ornaments of poetry.

The goddess is described coming in all her majesty to destroy order and science; and the description is so animated and poignant, that I cannot resist the pleasure of transcribing it.

“ Beneath



“ Beneath her foot-stool, *Science* groans in  
 “ Chains,  
 “ And *Wit* dreads Exile, Penalties and Pains \*.  
 “ There foam’d rebellious *Logic*, gagg’d and  
 “ bound,  
 “ There, stript, fair *Rhet’ric* languish’d on the  
 “ ground ;  
 “ His blunted Arms by *Sophistry* are born,  
 “ And shameless *Billingsgate* her Robes adorn.  
 “ *Morality*, by her false Guardians drawn,  
 “ *Chicane* in Furs, and *Casuistry* in Lawn,  
 “ Gasps, as they straiten at each end the  
 “ cord,  
 “ And dies, when Dulness gives her Page the  
 “ word.  
 “ Mad *Mátthesis* alone was unconfin’d,  
 “ Too mad for mere material chains to bind,  
 “ Now to pure Space lifts her extatic stare,  
 “ Now running round the Circle, finds it  
 “ square.”

The *Muses* next are cast into bondage by Dulness, and treated with scorn by a harlot, whose form is admirably described as representative of the nature and genius of the Italian opera.

Now the sons of Dulness, drawn by an attractive power, and impulsive gravity of head, all gather round the goddess, and are equally eager to present the first address. But the ge-

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\* This line alludes to the exile, &c. of Atterbury, Bishop of Rochester.



nius of the schools takes the lead, and harangues the goddesses in the following speech, which conveys the keenest satire on the preposterous plan of scholastic education.

- . . . " Since Man from beast by Words is  
 " known,  
 " Words are Man's province, Words we teach  
 " alone.  
 " When Reason doubtful, like the Samian  
 " letter,  
 " Points him two ways, the narrower is the  
 " better.  
 " Plac'd at the door of Learning, youth to  
 " guide,  
 " We never suffer it to stand too wide.  
 " To ask, to guess, to know, as they com-  
 " mence,  
 " As Fancy opens the quick springs of Sense,  
 " We ply the Memory, we load the Brain,  
 " Bind rebel Wit, and double Chain on Chain,  
 " Confine the thought, to exercise the breath;  
 " And keep them in the pale of Words till death.  
 " Whate'er the talents, or howe'er design'd,  
 " We hang one jingling padlock on the  
 " mind."

This is a fine ridicule on the preposterous method of forcing all boys to make verses, whether they have a poetical turn or not.

The pedagogue then complains, that when men come into the world, they sometimes forget this verbal learning, and apply themselves  
 to



to useful knowledge, which occasions the goddesses suddenly to break forth in an eager wish for *arbitrary power*, which is best supported by turning men's attention from the study of things, to that of words and sounds.

“ Oh (cry'd the Goddesses) for some pedant Reign!  
 “ Some gentle JAMES, to bless the land  
     “ again;  
 “ To stick the Doctor's Chair into the Throne,  
 “ Give law to Words, or war with Words  
     “ alone,  
 “ Senates and Courts with Greek and Latin  
     “ rule,  
 “ And turn the Council to a Grammar School!  
 “ For sure, if Dulness sees a grateful Day,  
 “ 'Tis in the shade of Arbitrary Sway.  
 “ O! if my sons may learn one earthly thing,  
 “ Teach but that one, sufficient for a King;  
 “ That which my Priests, and mine alone,  
     “ maintain,  
 “ Which as it dies, or lives, we fall, or reign :  
 “ May you, my Cam, and Isis, preach it long!  
 “ The RIGHT DIVINE of Kings to govern  
     “ wrong.”

These few lines are penned with the spirit of true genius, which is ever abhorrent of tyranny under every form. The sound sense, strong satire, and manly freedom of sentiment with which our poet on all occasions vindicates the political and religious rights of mankind, plainly prove him to have been a bigot to no sect or party.



The goddesses having called upon her sons to preach the slavish doctrine of divine right, the poet with great pleasantry and propriety makes the deputies of the universities, especially the friends of Aristotle, attend prompt at her call. Aristotle had established it as a principle, that some men were by nature made to serve, and others to command, therefore none so fit as his followers to enforce the servile doctrine of divine right.

The speech of Aristarchus, who explains to the goddesses the mode of academic education, as chiefly confined to verbal criticism, is replete with keen ridicule: and the exclamation which follows is happily expressed.

“ Ah, think not, Mistress ! more true Dulness  
“ lies

“ In Folly’s Cap, than Wisdom’s grave disguise.

“ Like buoys, that never sink into the flood,

“ On Learning’s surface we but lie and nod.

“ Thine is the genuine head of many a  
“ house,

“ And much Divinity without a Nêç.”

Having displayed the art of teaching words without things, in the same dull track with the grammar-school, in the next place, he exhibits the skill of teaching things, without any profit to the pupil, by perversely misapplying his talents to pursuits from which he is wholly averse ; or confining his genius with the curb of *authority*, which brings all minds to one dead level.

This



This part of the speech of Aristarchus is so poignant, and just a satire on modern education, that the transcript will not appear long.

- “ What tho’ we let some better sort of fool  
 “ Thrid ev’ry science, run through ev’ry  
 “ school?  
 “ Never by tumbler through the hoops was  
 “ shown  
 “ Such skill in passing all, and touching none.  
 “ He may indeed (if sober all this time)  
 “ Plague with Dispute, or persecute with  
 “ Rhyme.  
 “ We only furnish what he cannot use,  
 “ Or wed to what he must divorce, a Muse:  
 “ Full on the midst of Euclid dip at once,  
 “ And petrify a Genius to a Dunce:  
 “ Or set on Metaphysic ground to prance,  
 “ Show all his paces, not a step advance.  
 “ With the same CEMENT, ever sure to bind,  
 “ We bring to one dead level ev’ry mind:  
 “ Then take him to develop, if you can,  
 “ And hew the Block off, and get out the Man.”

The poet proceeds by regular gradations still farther to expose the defects of fashionable education, in the character of a youth just returned from his travels, attended by his governor and a courtesan, whose appearance drives Aristarchus away.

For the beauty of poetical description, and for exquisite raillery, nothing perhaps can exceed the following lines, which expose the  
 absurd



absurd progress and mischievous fruits of modern travelling, in a speech from the tutor to the goddesses.

\* \* \* \* \*

“ Receive, great Empress ! thy accomplish’d

“ Son :

“ Thine from the birth, and sacred from the

“ Rod,

“ A dauntless Infant ! never scar’d with God.

\* \* \* \* \*

“ Thro’ *School* and *College*, thy kind cloud

“ o’ercast,

“ Safe and unseen the young Eneas past :

“ Thence bursting glorious, all at once let

“ down,

“ Stunn’d with his giddy Larum half the

“ town.

“ Intrepid then, o’er seas and lands he flew :

“ Europe he saw, and Europe saw him too.

“ There all thy gifts and graces we display,

“ Thou, only thou, directing all our way !

“ To where the Seine, obsequious as she

“ runs,

“ Pours at great Bourbon’s feet her silken

“ fons ;

“ Or Tyber, now no longer Roman, rolls,

“ Vain of Italian Arts, Italian Souls :

“ To happy Convents, bosom’d deep in vines,

“ Where slumber Abbots, purple as their

“ wines ;

“ To



" To Isles of fragrance, lilly-silver'd vales,  
 " Diffusing languor in the panting gales :  
 " To lands of singing, or of dancing slaves,  
 " Love-whisp'ring woods, and lute-resound-  
     " ing waves.  
 " But chief her shrine where naked Venus  
     " keeps,  
 " And Cupids ride the Lion of the Deep ;  
 " Where, eas'd of Fleets, the Adriatic main  
 " Wafts the smooth Eunuch and enamour'd  
     " fwain.  
 " Led by my hand, he saunter'd Europe round,  
 " And gather'd ev'ry Vice on Christian  
     " ground ;  
 " Saw ev'ry Court, heard ev'ry King declare  
 " His royal Sense, of Op'ra's or the Fair ;  
 " The Stews and Palace equally explor'd,  
 " Intrigu'd with glory, and with spirit  
     " whor'd ;  
 " Try'd all *bors-d' œuvres*, all *liqueurs* de-  
     " fin'd,  
 " Judicious drank, and greatly-daring din'd ;  
 " Dropt the dull lumber of the Latin store,  
 " Spoil'd his own language, and acquir'd no  
     " more ;  
 " All Classic learning lost on Classic ground ;  
 " And last turn'd *Air*, the Echo of a Sound !

\* \* \* \* \*

" See, to my Country happy I restore  
 " This glorious Youth, and add one Venus  
     " more."

To



To complete the satire, the goddess is made to receive them graciously, and to bestow on them one of her choicest blessings.

“Pleas’d, she accepts the Hero, and the Dame,  
“Wraps in her Veil, and frees from *Sense of*  
“*Shame.*”

Sense, satire, and poetry were never more happily combined, than in the foregoing description.

The goddess is then surrounded by a crowd of *Indolents*, who are tortured with too much ease, and endure all the pains and penalties of laziness.

To relieve these from their sufferings, an Antiquarian steps forth, intreating the goddess to make them *Virtuosos*.

Here our author exposes the impositions of the *Virtuosi*, and the credulity of those who are the dupes of their artifices, in several pages of exquisite humour, which are too long for abridgement.

The virtuosi being disposed of, a fantastic troop next present themselves before the Goddess, crowned with weeds of shells, and make offerings of strange whimsical presents, such as a fungus, a toad, a nest, or a flower.



To the care of these Naturalists, the Goddess recommends the lethargic Indolents above-mentioned; adding, that their sleepy brothers may be well employed in the study of *Butterflies*, *Birds-nests*, *Shells*, *Moss*, &c. There is a great deal of pleasant ridicule in this recommendation from the Goddess.

“ The mind, in Metaphysics at a loss,  
 “ May wander in a wilderness of Moss;  
 “ The head that turns at super-lunar things,  
 “ Poiz’d with a tail, may steer on Wilkins’\*  
 “ wings.”

Dulness, however, cautiously warns her sons still to busy themselves about trifles, and to confine their researches to second causes. In her exclamatory speech to this effect, the poet takes occasion to satirize such trifling investigations of nature, with becoming dignity.

“ O! would the sons of Men once think their  
 “ Eyes  
 “ And Reason giv’n them but to study Flies!  
 “ See Nature in some partial narrow shape,  
 “ And let the Author of the Whole escape:  
 “ Learn but to trifle; or, who most observe,  
 “ To wonder at their Maker, not to serve.”

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\* Wilkins was one of the first projectors of the Royal Society, and entertained an extravagant notion of the possibility of man’s flying.



The Goddess has no sooner expressed this favourite wish, than she is addressed by a gloomy Sceptic, who undertakes to relieve Dulness from any apprehensions that her sons will ever apply their thoughts to any useful or extensive views of nature. In this address, the poet has admirably exposed the absurd principles, and deplorable condition, of minute philosophers and free-thinkers.

Says the vain-glorious Sceptic——

- “ Let others creep by timid steps, and slow,
- “ On plain Experience lay foundations low,
- “ By common sense to common knowledge  
“ bred,
- “ And last, to Nature’s Cause thro’ Nature led.
- “ All-seeing in thy mists, we want no guide,
- “ Mother of Arrogance, and Source of Pride !
- “ We nobly take the high *Priori* Road,
- “ And reason downward, till we doubt of God :
- “ Make Nature still encroach upon his plan ;
- “ And shove him off as far as e’er we can :
- “ Thrust some Mechanic Cause into his place ;
- “ Or bind in Matter, or diffuse in Space.
- “ Or, at one bound o’er-leaping all his laws,
- “ Make God Man’s Image, Man the final  
“ Cause,
- “ Find Virtue local, all Relation scorn,
- “ See all in *Self*, and but for *Self* be born :
- “ Of nought so certain as our *Reason* still,
- “ Of nought so doubtful as of *Soul* and *Will*.”



In these excellent lines, which are animated with the most pointed satire, the poet has happily contrived to inculcate the principles of sound philosophy and true piety.

The children of Dulness, thus tutored and accomplished, are presented to her in a body by Silenus the Epicurean philosopher, and are then allowed to taste of the cup, which is handed to them by *Magus* the minister to the Goddess, and which is no sooner tasted, than it occasions a total oblivion of all obligations divine, civil, moral, and rational.

The effects of this cup are described in a vein of exquisite raillery.

“ ——— One casts his eyes  
 “ Up to a *Star*, and like Endymion dies :  
 “ A *Feather*, shooting from another’s head,  
 “ Extracts his brain ; and Principle is fled ;  
 “ Lost is his God, his Country, ev’ry thing ;  
 “ And nothing left but Homage to a King !  
 “ The vulgar herd turn off to roll with Hogs,  
 “ To run with Horses, or to hunt with Dogs.”

These mysteries being over, Dulness, ever attentive to the welfare of her children, assigns each to the guidance of a proper conductor. These attendants are humorously described, under the characters of *Impudence*, *Stupefaction*, *Self-conceit*, *Self-interest*, *Pleasure*, *Epicurism*, &c. who apply themselves to the exercise of their several functions.



" Kind Self-conceit to some her glaſs applies,  
 " Which no one looks in with another's eyes :  
 " But as the Flatt'rer or Dependant paint,  
 " Beholds himſelf a Patriot, Chief, or Saint."

The poetical imagery in the following lines is exceedingly beautiful, and the ſentiment juſt.

" On others Int'reſt her gay liv'ry flings,  
 " Int'reſt, that waves on Party-colour'd wings :  
 " Turn'd to the Sun, ſhe caſts a thouſand  
     " dyes,  
 " And, as ſhe turns, the colours fall or riſe."

The reſt are repreſented, with great ſpirit and poignancy, in the diſplay of their various offices, by which the ſons of Dulneſs are prepared for the *titles* and *degrees* which the goddeſs confers upon them.

Having thus diſtinguiſhed them, ſhe beſtows her bleſſing on them ; and, in a ſhort ſpeech, ſhe recommends it to them to repair from theory to praſice.

" All my commands are eaſy, ſhort, and  
     " full :  
 " My Sons ! be proud, be ſelfiſh, and be  
     " dull."

She then particularizes the ſervices ſhe expects from each, and concludes her ſpeech with a *yawn* of ſuch marvellous efficacy, that it lulls and compoſes all orders of men throughout the  
king-



kingdom, and the poem ends with the restoration of Night and Chaos.

The following lines, which are prophetic of this restoration, are at once poetical, philosophical, and pious——

- “ She comes ! she comes ! the sable Throne  
 “ behold  
 “ Of *Night* primaeval, and of *Chaos* old !  
 “ Before her, *Fancy*’s gilded clouds decay,  
 “ And all its varying Rain-bows die away.  
 “ *Wit* shoots in vain its momentary fires,  
 “ The meteor drops, and in a flash expires.  
 “ As one by one, at dread Medea’s strain,  
 “ The sick’ning stars fade off th’ ethereal  
 “ plain ;  
 “ As Argus’ eyes, by Hermes’ wand oppress’d,  
 “ Clos’d one by one to everlasting rest ;  
 “ Thus at her felt approach, and secret might,  
 “ *Art* after *Art* goes out, and all is Night.  
 “ See skulking *Truth*, to her old cavern fled,  
 “ Mountains of *Casuiſtry* heap’d o’er her head !  
 “ *Philosophy*, that lean’d on Heav’n before,  
 “ Shrinks to her *second Cause*, and is no more.  
 “ *Phyſic* of *Metaphyſic* begs defence,  
 “ And *Metaphyſic* calls for aid on *Senſe* !  
 “ See *Mystery* to *Mathematics* fly !  
 “ In vain ! they gaze, turn giddy, rave, and  
 “ die.  
 “ *Religion* blushing veils her ſacred fires,  
 “ And unawares *Morality* expires.”



It is to be wished that the poem had concluded with these admirable lines, which convey so keen and just a censure on the visionary raptures of the late noble author of the *Characteristics*. The six succeeding lines \*, which close the piece, are little more than a repetition, or amplification of what was before more forcibly expressed.

But upon the whole, this book may be esteemed as one of the choicest of our author's compositions. The plan of it, as the Editor observes, was artfully contrived to shew that the defects of a fashionable education, naturally led to, and ended in, *Free-thinking*. This plan is conducted throughout with the true spirit of indignant satire, and with the most glorious and laudable design, which can animate a great genius--That of advancing the ends of virtue and religion †.

It

- \* “ Nor public Flame, nor private, dares to shine ;
- “ Nor *human* Spark is left, nor Glimpse *divine* !
- “ Lo ! thy dread Empire, CHAOS ! is restor'd,
- “ Light dies before thy uncreating word :
- “ Thy hand, great Anarch ! lets the curtain fall ;
- “ And universal Darkness buries All.”

† Our author was apprehensive that this satire on travelling, virtuosity, and freethinking, would raise a storm against him, which he humorously prophesies in a letter to his friend Mr. Bethel.

“ One of my amusements has been writing a poem, part  
 “ of which is to abuse *Travelling* ; you have made me have a  
 “ quarrel to it, even when it was for a good reason, and (I  
 “ hope) will be attended with a good effect, which it rarely  
 “ is in the cases I have satirized it for. I little thought three  
 “ months



It is to be regretted therefore, as has been observed, that the beauties of this book, should be lavished to adorn a poem, which has personal satire for its chief object.

The insignificant dunces and malevolent critics exposed in this piece, are falling into oblivion; and when their characters are wholly forgotten, the *Dunciad* will become in a great degree uninteresting.

Even the hero of the poem, who with matchless effrontery, affected to be insensible to just reproof, is now scarcely remembered; so transient is the memory of pertness and vanity.

It is to be wished, that our author had never descended to have bestowed so much attention on an object so unworthy of his pen, and on whom the most pointed and just satire could produce so little good effect.

Cibber was in his nature incorrigible. He was endued with so little nice sensibility and

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“ months ago to have drawn the whole polite world upon  
 “ me (as I formerly did the Dunces of a lower species) as I  
 “ certainly shall, whenever I publish this poem. An army  
 “ of Virtuosi, Medalists, Ciceroni, Royal-Society-men,  
 “ Schools, Universities, even Florists, Free-thinkers, and  
 “ Free-masons, will encompass me with fury: It will be  
 “ once more *concurrere bellum atque virum*. But a good con-  
 “ science, a bold spirit, a zeal for truth, at whatsoever ex-  
 “ pence, of whatever pretenders to science, or of all impo-  
 “ sition, either literary, moral, or poetical, these animated  
 “ me, and these will support me.”



moral delicacy, that so far from blushing at the detection of his vices and follies, the perfection of his abilities consisted in making them the instruments, by which he attracted the notice of mankind.

It is not to be wondered, that a man thus totally exempt from all sense of shame, and whose highest vanity was to divert the rabble, should gain a contemptible party of laughers on his side.

This Cibber did. To the force of keen satire and poignant ridicule, he opposed licentious ribaldry, and pitiful buffoonery \*. But though

\* The just contempt in which Mr. POPE held the author of this ribaldry, appears in one of his letters to Mr. Bethel, where, speaking of the *Dunciad*, he says—

“ That poem has not done me, or my quiet, the least harm, only it provoked Cibber to write a very foolish and impudent letter ; which I have no cause to be sorry for ; and perhaps next winter I shall be thought to be glad of : but I lay in my claim to you, to testify for me, that if he should chance to die before a new and improved edition of the *Dunciad* comes out, I have already actually written, (before, and not after his death) all I shall ever say about him.”

He farther expresses his contempt of the Laureat, though in a more jocular manner, in another letter to the same Gentleman, dated from Bath, where a certain princess at that time resided.

“ Cibber,” says he, “ is here to celebrate her ; and he writes his verses now, in such a manner, that no body can use them as they were wont to do ; for no body will, on certain occasions, use a pane of glass.”

the



the man, who is so unfeeling as to laugh on occasions which should command a blush, will always find senseless grinners to keep him in countenance, yet he will appear despicable in the eyes of every one of discernment and decorum; and his vices and follies will disgrace his memory, while the talents which shaded and disguised them, are no longer remembered.

Indeed we have too much reason to conclude, that the good purpose intended by this satire was, to the herd in general, of less efficacy than our poet hoped. For scriblers have not the common sense of other vermin, who usually abstain from mischief, when they see any of their kind gibbeted or nailed up, as terrible examples.

It will not be immaterial to observe, that Mr. POPE laid the plan of the fourth book at the request of the learned editor of his works, who reminded him that it was a pity so fine a poem as the *Dunciad*, should remain disgraced by the meanness of its subject; and that he ought to raise and ennoble it by pointing his satire against minute philosophers and free-thinkers \*.

Such

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\* The editor of his works observes, that he imagined it was for the interest of religion to have it known, that so great a genius had a due abhorrence of those pests of virtue and society.

It was to advance the same ends of virtue and religion, that the editor prevailed on him to alter every thing in his



Such a recommendation does honour to him who gave it; but still it is to be wished, that the admirable contents of the fourth book had been totally detached, from the poem of which they constitute a part. The weight and importance of the subjects treated of in this book, seem to have required such a separation: and they would perhaps, if possible, have appeared with still greater dignity, had they not been blended with the levities \* in other parts of this poem.

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*Moral Writings*, that might be suspected to have the least glance towards *Fate* or *Naturalism*, and to add what was proper to convince the world that he was warmly on the side of *Moral Government* and a REVEALED WILL: and the editor assures us, that it would be great injustice to Mr. POPE's memory not to declare that he embraced these occasions with unfeigned pleasure.

Mr. POPE himself acknowledges the influence of the editor's recommendation, in a letter addressed to him, the 28th December, 1742, where he says—"The encouragement you gave me to add the fourth book, first determined me to do so; and the approbation you seemed to give it, was what *singly* determined me to print it."

\* Our author himself seems to apologize for the levity of this piece, in the following letter, addressed to the learned annotator.

"I have just received yours, and as I have no words to express, farther than you already know, my sincere desire to merit your friendship, I will not employ any. I thank you for what you so freely have done, and shall put it to the press with all haste, the rest of the book being ready.

"If any thing more can be done for the *Dunciad*, it must be to acquaint the public, that you have thought it worth your care, by bestowing some notes upon it, to make it more important and serious."

"This



“ This fourth book was published long after the first three, and the author pleasantly pre- fixed an *advertisement* to the first edition of it, which made its appearance separately in the year 1742 \*, intimating that it was by a different hand from the other, and found in detached pieces, incorrect and unfinished.”

The editor of his works objected to him the affectation of using so unpromising an attempt to mislead his reader. He replied, very shrewdly, that the editor thought too highly of the public taste; that, most commonly, it was formed on that of half a dozen people in fashion who took the lead, and sometimes intruded the dullest performances on the town, for works of wit: while at the same time, some true efforts of genius, without name or recommendation, have passed unobserved or neglected, by the public eye.

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\* We find, by a letter above quoted from our author to Mr. Bethel, that he expected to raise a storm against him by the publication of the fourth book of the *Dunciad*; and it appears, by the following letter, that his friend entertained apprehensions on his account, which he thus facetiously removes.

“ To give you ease, in relation to the event of my poem, which dealing much in general, not particular satire, has stirred up little or no resentment, though it be levelled much higher than the former; yet men not being singled out from the herd, bear chastisement better, like galley-slaves, for being all linked in a string, and on the same rank.”



He added many other just reflections on this occasion, and the event shewed that he was not mistaken. The fourth book, the most studied and highly finished of all his poems, was esteemed *obscure* †, (a name which, in excess of modesty, the reader gives to what he does not understand) and but a faint imitation, by some common hand, of the other three. He had himself the malicious pleasure of hearing this judgment passed on his favourite work, by several of his acquaintance; a pleasure more to his taste than the flatteries they used to entertain him with, and were then intentionally paying him.

The Dunciad, it is said, was presented to the King \* and Queen, by Sir Robert Walpole, who,

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† To prove, among other instances, how industriously Lord Bolingbroke concealed his licentious principles from Mr. POPE, and how much he affected before him to dislike *Freethinkers*, it may be material to observe, that when the fourth book of the Dunciad was published, Lord Bolingbroke was abroad; but on the change of the ministry, he returned to England. At his first interview with Mr. POPE, he said—"It seems you have written a *fourth* book; but it was represented to me as so *obscure* by every body, that I had no inclination to read it till the other day, when I found it to be the best and most finished of all your writings. The satire on Freethinkers, is most just and useful; and ennobles a work of wit, which only wanted that advantage."

\* When the new edition of the Dunciad was published, with notes, Mr. POPE regained by it the good opinion of the court. The King declared that he was a *very honest man*. Perhaps the court esteemed *bad Poets* a more legitimate object of satire, than *bad Politicians*.



about this time, it is thought, offered to procure him a pension, which he refused with the same noble spirit with which he had formerly declined offers of this nature. This proposal of Sir Robert's, is probably hinted at in a passage of one of our author's letters to Dean Swift, which the reader may see in the note underneath †.

Mr. POPE observed, that he was wholly obliged to the whig ministry, for thoughts of this nature. His friend Lord Oxford, he assures us, never made such a proposal to him: though he often used to talk with great kindness to him, and frequently expressed his concern, that he should be incapable of a *place* without giving inquietude to his father and mother—Such concern, said our pious poet, as I would not have given to either, for all the places which the ministry could have bestowed on me. Lord Oxford, however, never made him any offer of a *pension*.

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† “I was once before displeased at you for complaining to Mr. ——— of my not having a pension. I am so again, at your naming it to a certain Lord. I have given proof, in the course of my life, from the time that I was in the friendship of Lord Bolingbroke and Mr. Craggs, even to this time, when I am civilly treated by Sir Robert Walpole, that I never thought myself so warm in any party's cause, as to deserve their money, and therefore would never have accepted it. I desire you to take off any impressions which that dialogue may have left upon his Lordship's mind, as if I ever had any thoughts of being beholden to him, or any other, in that way.”



But Lord Halifax, as we are assured by Mr. POPE, sent for him of his own accord, in the beginning of the reign of George the First, and acquainted him that he had often been concerned that his merit had never been rewarded as it deserved; adding, that he was very glad it was now in his power to be of service to him, by settling a pension upon him, if he chose to accept of it, and that no return should be required of him for it.

Mr. POPE, having thanked him for the proposal, desired time to consider of it; and about three months after, having in the interim heard nothing from his Lordship, he wrote to him, repeating his obligations to him for the offer, but at the same time declining it, with a noble indifference\*.

We

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\* The letter was expressed in the following terms——

“ My LORD,

“ I am obliged to you, both for the favours you have  
 “ done me†, and those you intend me. I distrust neither  
 “ your will nor your memory, when it is to do good: and if  
 “ ever I become troublesome or solicitous, it must not be out  
 “ of expectation, but out of gratitude. Your Lordship  
 “ may either cause me to live agreeably in the town, or contentedly in the country; which is really all the difference  
 “ I set between an easy fortune and a small one. It is in-

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† His Lordship not only subscribed himself to the *Iliad*, but promoted it in the Hanover Club, and rallied their secretary *Philips*, for keeping the subscriptions in his hands for some time, out of enmity to Mr. POPE.

“ deed



We do not find, that any farther proposals of this nature were made, till Mr. Craggs came into the ministry: and this minister, in all the warmth of friendship, assured Mr. POPE, that a pension of 300 *l.* per annum waited his acceptance: adding with great frankness and cordiality, that he, having the disposal of the secret service money, could pay him such an annual sum without the privity of any one.

But our author, without hesitation, declined this inviting offer. He thanked the secretary for the warm zeal of his friendship, assuring him that he could not accept of a pension; but that, to shew his sense of so friendly a proposal, if he should at any time have occasion for a sum of money, he would apply to him.---An application however which he never made.

Mr. Craggs pressed this offer more than once, urging to him at the same time, how convenient the use of a coach would be. Mr. POPE, however, though very sensible of the convenience of an equipage, rightly judged that if on the strength of so precarious an income, he should contract such a habit of indulgence, the want of it would prove doubly inconvenient to him; if,

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“ deed a high strain of generosity in you to think of making  
 “ me easy all my life, only because I have been so happy to  
 “ divert you some few hours; but if I may have leave to  
 “ add, it is because you think me no enemy to my native  
 “ country, there will appear a better reason.”

from



from an accidental failure of that income, he should no longer be able to support it.

In short, Mr. POPE constantly declined all offers of this nature, with a steadiness which does honour to his character. Nay, he even carried his scruples so far, as to decline making use of a subscription for 1000*l.* in the South Sea, of which Mr. Craggs made him an offer in the year 1720. And he used to say, it was a satisfaction to him that he did not grow rich (as he might have done) by the public calamity. Of this noble spirit of independence, he shewed himself conscious in the epistle above mentioned to Dr. Arbuthnot, where we find him speaking of himself with becoming pride, as——

“ Unplac’d, unpension’d, no man’s heir, or  
“ slave.”

Mr. POPE’s delicacy of sentiment probably suggested to him, that the accepting of such offers, might impose on him an obligation of detaching himself from some personal connections which he valued: and he always industriously avoided all party-attachments, declaring in a letter to his friend Swift, that he had personal obligations to men of different sides, which he would never violate.

As Mr. POPE’s spirit made him abhor the thought of a dependant state, so his prudence placed him above the necessity of submitting to it.

Mr.



Mr. POPE was superior to the little pride of supposing that an inattention to domestic concerns, was characteristical of a great genius. On the contrary, that fortune which his merit acquired, he was mindful to husband to the best advantage. With this view, in the year 1729, he purchased an annuity of 100 *l.* for his own life, and with pious sollicitude, took care likewise to include his mother's life in the purchase.

Our author having taken leave of satire, we find his muse, in the sixth volume, more agreeably engaged. In this volume of his works we find imitations of the lighter pieces of Horace, some of them in the manner of Swift. They shew with what happy dexterity our author descends from grave to gay.

The most distinguished of these little pieces, is his imitation of the first Ode of the fourth book of Horace. This has all the ease and elegance of the original, and frequently surpasses it.

Our author here takes occasion to pay a delicate compliment to his friend, then Mr. MURRAY, which in some parts is more happily turned than the Latin.

“ *Ad VENEREM.*

“ *Mater saeva cupidinum,*

“ *Circa lustra decem flectere mollibus*

“ *Jam durum imperiis: abi*

“ *Quo blandae juventum te revocant preces.*

“ *Tem-*



- “ *Tempestivius in domum*  
   “ *Paulli, purpureis ales oloribus,*  
 “ *Comissabere Maximi ;*  
   “ *Si torrere jecur quaeris idoneum\*.*  
 “ *Namque et nobilis, et decens,*  
   “ *Et pro sollicitis non tacitus reis,*  
 “ *Et centum puer artium,*  
   “ *Late signa feret militiae tuae.*  
 “ *Et, quandoque potentior*  
   “ *Largis muneribus riserit aemuli,*  
 “ *Albanos prope te lacus*  
   “ *Ponet marmoream sub trabe citrea.*  
 “ *Illic plurima naribus*  
   “ *Duces thura ; lyraque et Berecynthiae*  
 “ *Delectabere tibia*  
   “ *Mixtis carminibus, non sine fistula.*  
 “ *Illic bis pueri die*  
   “ *Numen cum teneris virginibus tuum*  
 “ *Laudantes, pede candido*  
   “ *In morem Salium ter quatient humum.*

\* \* \* \* \*

“ TO VENUS.

- “ Mother too fierce of dear desires !  
   “ Turn, turn to willing hearts your wan-  
     “ ton fires.  
 “ To *Number five* direct your doves,  
   “ There spread round MURRAY all your  
     “ blooming loves ;

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\* The imitation, the reader will observe, has all the pleasantry and sprightliness of the Latin, and has avoided the indelicacy of *torrere jecur idoneum*.

“ Noble



- “ Noble and young, who strikes the heart  
 “ With ev’ry sprightly, every decent part;  
 “ Equal, the injur’d to defend,  
 “ To charm the mistress, or to fix the  
 “ friend.  
 “ He, with a hundred arts refin’d,  
 “ Shall stretch thy conquests over half the  
 “ kind:  
 “ To him each rival shall submit,  
 “ Make but his riches equal to his wit.  
 “ Then shall thy form the marble grace  
 “ (Thy Grecian form) and Chloe lend the  
 “ face:  
 “ His house, embosom’d in the grove †,  
 “ Sacred to social life and social love,  
 “ Shall glitter o’er the pendent green,  
 “ Where Thames reflects the visionary  
 “ scene:  
 “ Thither, the silver-sounding lyres  
 “ Shall call the smiling loves, and young  
 “ desires;  
 “ There, ev’ry grace and muse shall throng,  
 “ Exalt the dance, or animate the song;  
 “ There youths and nymphs, in consort gay,  
 “ Shall hail the rising, close the parting  
 “ day.”

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† He had at that time an intention of leaving his house at Twickenham to Mr. Murray, on very easy terms; and with this view he entertained the projects of several improvements and purchases. But when he found, by the growing fame and rising station of his friend, that it was never likely to be of any use to him, he laid aside that purpose.



The conclusion is very poetical, and much beyond the Latin. The poet laments that he is no longer susceptible of those joys, though he still follows the goddess in his dreams: And he thus describes the delusion of fancy.

*“ Nocturnis te ego somniis  
 “ Jam captum teneo, jam volucrem sequor  
 “ Te per gramina Martii  
 “ Campi, te per aquas, dure, volubiles.”*

\* \* \* \* \*

“ Now, now I seize, I clasp thy charms,  
 “ And now you burst (ah cruel !) from my  
 “ arms ;  
 “ And swiftly shoot along the Mall,  
 “ Or softly glide by the canal,  
 “ Now shewn by Cynthia’s silver ray,  
 “ And now, on rolling waters snatch’d  
 “ away.”

Among the little pieces in this volume, is an Epistle to the Earl of Oxford, which was sent with Dr. Parnelle’s poems, published by our author, after the said Earl’s imprisonment in the Tower, and retreat into the country, in the year 1721 ; and which is, indeed, a master-piece.

The following lines in this epistle seem to claim particular notice.

“ Such were the notes thy once-lov’d poet sung,  
 “ Till death untimely stopp’d his tuneful  
 “ tongue.

“ For



\* \* \* \* \*

“ For him, thou oft hast bid the world attend,  
 “ Fond to forget the statesman in the friend †;  
 “ For Swift, and him, despis’d the farce of state,  
 “ The sober follies of the wise and great;  
 “ Dext’rous, the craving, fawning crowd to quit,  
 “ And pleas’d to ’scape from flattery to wit.”

There is great beauty likewise in the lines, whereby our author describes the amiable sincerity, and all-powerful influence of his favourite muse.

“ In vain to deserts thy retreat is made;  
 “ The muse attends thee to thy silent shade:  
 “ ’Tis hers, the brave man’s latest steps to  
     “ trace,  
 “ Rejudge his acts, and dignify disgrace.

† There is perhaps too much truth in these lines; but whatever our author might intend, it was certainly no compliment to a fallen minister, to remind him, that he used to make the world attend, while he was entertaining himself with a man of wit. But the fact is, that Lord Oxford, as a minister, was negligent, if we may believe what Lord Bolingbroke used to say to his friends. He added likewise, that Oxford was, in conversation, puzzled and embarrassed; and, upon the whole, unequal to his station. It was his wont, every day almost, to send idle verses from court to the *Scriblerus* Club, which consisted of Swift, Arbuthnot, Parnelle, Pope, and sometimes Gay. He was likewise used to frequent the Club every night almost, and would talk idly, even on the crisis of the most important concerns.

Envy itself, however, must allow that this nobleman displayed a most manly fortitude during the course of his adversity.



“ When Int’rest calls off all her sneaking train,  
 “ And all th’ oblig’d desert, and all the vain ;  
 “ She waits, or to the scaffold, or the cell,  
 “ When the last ling’ring friend has bid fare-  
 “ well.”

The two epistles likewise to Mrs. Blount \*, have distinguished merit. That which is addressed to her on her leaving the town after the Coronation, opens with inimitable ease and pleantry.

“ As some fond virgin, whom her mother’s care  
 “ Drags from the town to wholesome country  
 “ air,  
 “ Just when she learns to roll a melting eye,  
 “ And hear a spark, yet think no danger nigh ;  
 “ From the dear man unwilling she must sever,  
 “ Yet takes one kiss before she parts for ever :  
 “ Thus from the world fair Zephalinda flew,  
 “ Saw others happy, and with sighs withdrew ;  
 “ Not that their pleasures caus’d her discontent,  
 “ She sigh’d not that they stay’d, but that she  
 “ went †.”

The

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\* Mr. POPE appears to have had a very sincere and tender friendship for this Lady, which malice was forward to misconstrue. In a letter to Mr. Bethel, he thus bewails the censoriousness of the world, which prevents his good offices towards her.—“ Half the effects of my friendship for  
 “ her, God knows, are rendered impracticable or disagree-  
 “ able to her, by malicious insinuations ; and I cannot be  
 “ of the use I wish to be to her.”

† The writer of these sheets has now in his hand the original copy of these verses, from whence it appears that our  
 author



The rest of this poem abounds with turns of agreeable humour and sprightly gallantry. But our extracts have already, in the opinion of some, perhaps, been too copious.

There are several other miscellaneous little pieces in this volume which have great merit, more especially the collection of Epitaphs, of which it is sufficient to say, that they are equal, if not superior to any compositions of the same kind.

The contents of the remaining volumes of the octavo edition of his works, consist of the Memoirs of Scriblerus, select Essays which he wrote in the *Guardian*, as likewise his Preface to the Translation of Homer's Iliad, and the Works of Shakespear, together with some lesser pieces, and his several epistolary correspondences.

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author made some alterations, perhaps not for the better. The seventh line in the original stood thus——

“ So fair *Teresa* gave the town a view.”

The alteration, though it has undoubtedly improved the harmony of the verse, may probably be thought not to have mended the sense: For the reluctance with which she went into the country is better described by her taking a wishful retrospective view of the town, than by her flying from it. It must be added, that in the original there are sixteen additional lines, which immediately follow the last line of the printed copy. In these the poet humorously describes the manner in which the *beau Esprits* spent their time in town. But on reflection he thought proper to suppress these lines.



The prefaces to Homer and Shakespear are, of themselves, sufficient testimonies of his extensive learning, and critical skill. The other fugitive pieces, though excellent of their kind, are too inconsiderable to claim particular animadversion.

It would be unpardonable, however, to pass over his epistolary correspondence, without distinguished notice. These are in truth not less excellent in their kind, than his poetical pieces. In the turn of his letters, he displays that inimitable grace, in which we find all the wit, humour, and *enjournment* of *Voiture*, joined to the good sense and penetration of B----. It is not too much to say of them, that they afford the most perfect model of epistolary writing; such as becomes a correspondence between men of virtue, wit and learning, improved by a knowledge of the world. But what principally recommends them, is that frank sincerity, that artless *naïveté*, that unaffected openness, which shews the amiable and virtuous disposition of the writer\*.

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\* It is material to observe, that it was the publication of Mr. POPE's Letters, which first endeared him to Mr. Allen. Though he had long been acquainted with our poet, and *admired* him for the excellence of his genius, yet the asperity of his satirical pieces was so repugnant to the softness and suavity of that worthy man's disposition, that it in some degree estranged him from his intimacy. But no sooner had he read our author's letters, than he *loved* him for the goodness and virtues of his heart: and ever after entertained the most cordial affection for him.



Among these epistolary pieces, however, I must not omit taking notice of the Character of the Duchess of Buckingham, which was pretended to have been penned by Mr. POPE; but in truth Mr. POPE seems to have had but little share in the composition of it, as appears by a letter of his to a friend, which is subjoined to the Character.

This Lady seems to have been one of those in whose character our author appears to have been mistaken, as appears by a letter addressed to Mr. Bethel \*.

Among

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\* In this letter, having acquainted his friend that his house and garden were offered to him in sale, he adds——  
 “ If I thought any very particular friend would be pleased to  
 “ live in it after my death (for as it is, it serves all my pur-  
 “ poses as well during life) I would purchase it; and more  
 “ particularly, could I hope two things, that the friend  
 “ who should like it, was so much younger, and healthier  
 “ than myself, as to have a prospect of its continuing his  
 “ some years longer than I can of its continuing mine.  
 “ But most of those I love, are travelling out of the world,  
 “ not into it; and unless I had such a view given me, I have  
 “ no vanity nor pleasure, that does not stop short of the grave.

“ The Duchess of Buckingham has thought other-  
 “ wise, who ordered all manner of vanities for her own  
 “ funeral, and a sum of money to be squandered on it,  
 “ which is but necessary to preserve from starving many  
 “ poor people, to whom she is indebted. I doubt not Mrs.  
 “ Pratt is as much astonished as you or I, at her leaving  
 “ Sir Robert Walpole her trustee, and Lord Hervey her  
 “ executor, with a marriage-settlement on his daughter,  
 “ that will take place of all the prior debts she has in the  
 “ world. All her private papers, and those of her corre-  
 “ spondents, are left in the hands of Lord Hervey; so that



Among our author's lesser pieces, may properly be classed the following copy of verses, which have never yet been printed, and for which the public is indebted to the honourable Mr. Yorke \*. The verses, which appear to have been written in the year 1730, are addressed to Dr. Bolton, late Dean of Carlisle, who lived some time at Twickenham with old Lady Blount. On the death of her mother (Mrs. Butler of Suffolk) Dr. Bolton drew up the mother's character; from thence Mr. POPE took occasion to write this epistle to Dr. Bolton, in the name of Mrs. Butler's spirit, now in the regions of bliss.

" Stript to the naked soul, escap'd from clay,  
 " From doubts unfetter'd, and dissolv'd in day;  
 " Unwarm'd by vanity, unreach'd by strife,  
 " And all my hopes and fears thrown off with  
     " life;  
 " Why am I charm'd by friendship's fond  
     " essays,  
 " And though unbody'd, conscious of thy  
     " praise?

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" it is not impossible another volume of my letters may  
 " come out. I am sure they make no part of her treasonable  
 " correspondence (which they say she has expressly left to  
 " him) but sure this is infamous conduct towards any com-  
 " mon acquaintance. And yet this woman seem'd once a  
 " woman of great honour, and many generous principles."

\* We have here another instance, that the character of a great lawyer, is not inconsistent with that of an elegant and refined scholar. Were other instances in the profession wanting, I might point to a learned and able judge, who was not long since promoted to one of the chief seats of judicature.



"Has pride a portion in the parted soul?  
 "Does passion still the *firmless* mind controul?  
 "Can gratitude out-pant the silent breath?  
 "Or a friend's sorrow pierce the gloom of  
     "death?  
 "No----'tis a spirit's nobler task of bliss,  
 "That feels the worth it left, in proofs like  
     "this;  
 "That not its own applause, but thine approves,  
 "Whose practice praises, and whose virtue  
     "loves;  
 "Who liv'st to crown departed friends with  
     "fame;  
 "Then dying late, shalt all thou gav'st re-  
     "claim."

It must not be omitted, that in the year 1740, our Author appeared once more in the character of an Editor, having given an elegant edition in two volumes octavo, printed by Messrs. Knapton, of some of the finest Latin poems of the best Italian poets. The principal in this collection are the *Syphilis* of FRACASTORIUS, the *Bombyx*, the *Poetics* and the *Scacchia Lusus* of VIDA, the *De Animorum Immortalitate* of PALEARIUS, the *Eclogues* and *Elegies* of SANNAZARIUS, and the *Sylva* of POLITIAN.

It has been before intimated, that our author had formed a design of writing an epic poem on a story related in the old annalist, Geoffery of Monmouth, concerning the arrival of Brutus, the supposed grandson of Eneas, into our island,
 and



and the settlement of the first foundations of the British monarchy.

A sketch of this intended piece, now lies before the writer of these sheets ; and as the plan seems to be noble, extensive, and edifying, he trusts that an account of it will not only be entertaining, but instructive ; as the design may serve as a model to employ some genius, if any there be, or shall hereafter arise, equal to the execution of such an arduous task.

The poem, as has been observed, was to have been entitled BRUTUS. As Eneas was famed for his piety, so his grandson's characteristic was benevolence ; the first predominant principle of his character, which prompted his endeavours to redeem the remains of his countrymen, the descendants from Troy, then captives in Greece, and to establish their freedom and felicity in a just form of government.

He goes to Epirus, from thence he travels all over Greece ; collects all the scattered Trojans ; and redeems them with the treasures he brought from Italy.

Having collected his scattered countrymen, he consults the oracle of Dodona, and is promised a settlement in an island, which, from the description, appears to have been Britain. He then puts to sea, and enters the Atlantic ocean.



The first book was intended to open with the appearance of Brutus at the straits of Calpe, in sight of the Pillars of Hercules, (the *ne plus ultra*.) He was to have been introduced debating in council with his captains, whether it was advisable to launch into the great ocean, on an enterprize bold and hazardous as that of the great Columbus.

One reason, among others, assigned by Brutus, for attempting the great ocean in search of a new country, was, that he entertained no prospect of introducing pure manners in any part of the then known world; but that he might do it among a people uncorrupt in their manners, worthy to be made happy; and wanting only arts and laws to that purpose.

A debate ensues. Pisander, an old Trojan, is rather for settling in Betica, a rich country, near the straits, within the Mediterranean, of whose wealth they had heard great fame at Carthage. Brutus apprehends that the softness of the climate, and the gold found there, would corrupt their manners; besides, that the Tyrians, who had established great commerce there, had introduced their superstitions among the natives, and made them unapt to receive the instructions he was desirous to give.

Cloanthus, one of his captains, out of avarice and effeminacy, nevertheless desires to settle in a rich and fertile country, rather than to tempt the dangers of the ocean, out of a romantic notion of heroism,

This



This has such an effect, that the whole council being dismayed, are unwilling to pass the straits, and venture into the great ocean; pleading the example of Hercules for not advancing farther, and urging the presumption of going beyond a god. To which Brutus, rising with emotion, answers, that Hercules was but a mortal like them; and that if their virtue was superior to his, they would have the same claim to divinity: for that the path of virtue, was the only way which lay open to heaven.

At length he resolves to go in a single ship, and to reject all such dastards, as dared not accompany him.

Upon this, Orontes takes fire, declares he will attend him through any dangers; that he wants no oracle, but his own courage, and the love of glory. That it was for merchants like the Tyrians, not for heroes like them, to make trading settlements in a country, for the sake of its wealth.

All the younger part of the council agree to the sentiments of Orontes; and, from the love they bear to Brutus, determine to be the companions of his enterprize, and it is resolved to set sail the next day. That night Hercules appears to him in a vision, applauding and confirming the sentiments he had that day delivered in council, and encouraging him to persevere in the pursuit of the intended enterprize.



The second book opens with a picture of the supreme God in all his majesty, sitting on his throne in the highest heaven. The superintending angel of the Trojans empire (the *Regnum Priami vetus*) falls down before the throne, and confesses his justice in having overturned that kingdom, for the sins of the princes, and of the people themselves. But adds, that after having chastised and humbled them, it would now be agreeable to his mercy and goodness, to raise up a new state from their ruins, and form a people who might serve him better. That, in Brutus, his Providence had a fit instrument for such a gracious design.

This prostrate angel is raised by the Almighty, and permitted to attend upon Brutus in his voyage to Britain, in order to assist him in the reduction of that island.

The guardian angel, in pursuance of this commission, flies from heaven to the high mountain of Calpe; and from thence causes an east wind to blow, which carries the fleet out of the straits westward to the Canary islands, where he lands.

Here was to have been a description of Teneriff, and of the volcanoes, as likewise of a most delicious island, which is described to be without inhabitants. A great part of his followers are disposed to settle here. What more, say they, can we wish for ourselves, than such a pleasing end of all our labours? In an inhabited country we must, perhaps, be forced to fight, and destroy



stroy the natives; here, without encroaching upon others, without the guilt of a conquest, we may have a land that will supply us with all the necessaries of life. Why then should we go farther? Let us thank the gods, and rest here in peace. This affords room for a beautiful description of the land of laziness.

Brutus, however, rejects this narrow and selfish proposition, as incompatible with his generous plan of extending benevolence, by instructing and polishing uncultivated minds. He despises the mean thought of providing for the happiness of themselves alone, and sets the great promises of heaven before them.

His persuasions, being seconded by good omens, prevail; nevertheless they leave behind them the old men and the women, together with such as are timid and unfit for service, to enjoy their ease there, and erect a city. Over this colony, consisting however of about three thousand persons, he proposes to make Pisander king, under such limitations as appear to him wisest and best.

To this proposal they all assent with great satisfaction; only Pisander absolutely refuses to be King, and begs, notwithstanding his age, that he may attend Brutus in his enterprise. He urges that his experience and councils may be of use, though his strength is gone; and that he shall die unhappy, if he does not die in the arms of his friend.

Brutus



Brutus accepts his company, with great expressions of gratitude; and having left his colony a form of pure worship, and a short and simple body of laws, orders them to chuse a government for themselves, and then sets sail with none but resolute and noble associates.

Here the poet, by way of episode, meant to have introduced the passion of some friend, or the fondness of some female, who refused to stay behind, and determined to brave all hardships and perils, rather than quit the object of their affections.

Providence is now supposed to send his spirit to raise the wind, and direct it to the northward. The vessel at length touches at Lisbon, or Ulyssipont, where he meets with the son of a Trojan, captive of Ulysses. This gives occasion for an episode; and, among other things, furnishes an account of Ulysses settling there, and building of Lisbon; with a detail of the wicked principles of policy and superstition he had established, and of his being at length driven away by the discontented people he had enslaved.

Brutus is afterwards driven by a storm, raised by an evil spirit, as far as Norway. He prays to the Supreme God. His guardian angel calms the seas, and conducts the fleet safe into a port; but the evil spirit excites the barbarian people, to attack them at their landing.

Brutus



Brutus however repulses them, lands and encamps on the sea shore. In the night an *aurora borealis* astonishes his men, such a phenomenon having never been seen by them before.

He endeavours to keep up their spirits, by telling them that what they look upon as a prodigy, may be a phenomenon of nature usual in those countries, though unknown to them and him; but that if it be any thing supernatural, they ought to interpret it in their own favour, because heaven never works miracles, but for the good. About midnight they are attacked again by the Barbarians, and the light of the *aurora*, is of great use to them for their defence.

Brutus kills their chief leader, and Orontes the three next in command. This discourages them, and they fly up into the country. He makes prisoners of some of the natives, who had been used to those seas, and enquires of them concerning a great island to the south west of their country; they tell him they had been in such an island upon piratical voyages, and had carried some of the natives into captivity. He obtains some of these captives, whom he finds to be Britons; they describe their country to him, and undertake to pilot him.

In the next book, Brutus touches at the Orcaades, and a picture is given of the manners of the savages. The North Britons he brought with him from Norway, relate strange stories



concerning one of the greatest of their islands supposed to be inhabited by Daemons, who forbid all access to it by thunders, earthquakes, &c. Eudemon relates a tradition in Greece, that in one of the northern islands of the ocean, some of the Titans were confined after their overthrow by Jupiter. Brutus, to confound their superstition, resolves to land in that island.

Brutus sails thither in a small vessel of six oars attended only by Orontes, who insists on sharing with him in this adventure. When the boat approaches the shore, a violent hurricane rises, which dashes it against the rocks, and beats it to pieces. All the men are drowned but Brutus and Orontes, who swim to land. They find a thick forest dark and impenetrable, out of which proceeds a dreadful noise.

All at once the sun was darkened, a thick night comes over them; thundering noises, and bellowings are heard in the air, and underground. A terrible eruption of fire breaks out from the top of a mountain, the earth shakes beneath their feet, Orontes flies back into the wood, but Brutus remains undaunted, though in great danger of being swallowed up, or burnt by the fire. In this extremity he calls upon God; the eruption ceases, and his guardian angel appears to Brutus, telling him God had permitted the evil spirit to work seeming miracles by natural means, in order to try his virtue, and to humble the pride of Orontes, who was too confident in his courage, and too little regardful of providence. That the hill before them was a



volcano; that the effects of it dreadful, though natural, had made the ignorant savages believe the island to be an habitation of fiends. That the hurricane, which had wrecked his boat, was a usual symptom preceding an eruption. That he might have perished in the eruption, if God had not sent him his good angel to be his preserver.

He then directs him to seek the south-west parts of Great Britain, because the northern parts were infested by men not yet disposed to receive religion, arts and good government; the subduing and civilizing of whom was reserved by providence for a son, that should be born of him after his conquest of England.

Brutus promises to obey; the angel vanishes. Brutus finds Orontes in a cave of the wood; he is so ashamed of his fear, that he attempts to kill himself. Brutus comforts him, ascribes it to a supernatural terror, and tells him what he had heard from the angel. They go down to the coast, where they find Hanno, with a ship to carry them off.

The ensuing book describes the joy of Brutus, at sight of the white rocks of Albion. He lands at Torbay, and, in the western part of the island, meets with a kind reception.

The climate is described to be equally free from the effeminacy and softness of the southern climes, and the ferocity and savageness of the northern. The natural genius of the native being thus in the medium between these extremes, was well adapted to receive the improvements in virtue, he meditated to introduce. They are



represented worshippers of the sun and fire, but of good and gentle dispositions, having no bloody sacrifices among them. Here he meets the Druids, at an altar of turf, in an open place, offering fruits and flowers to heaven.

Then follows a picture of the haven, which is succeeded by an account of the northern parts, supposed to be infested by tyrants, of whom the Britains tell strange stories, representing them as giants, whom he undertakes to assist them in conquering.

Among these islands, our poet takes notice of the island Mona, groaning under the lash of superstition, being governed by priests.

Likewise of another distracted by *dismal Anarchy*, the neighbours eating their captives, and carrying away virgins; which affords room for a beautiful episode, describing the feelings of a passionate lover, who prevailed on Brutus to fly to the rescue of a favourite fair-one, whom, by his aid, he recovered from the arms of her brutal ravisher.

Our poet also speaks of a third under the dominion of *Tyranny*, which was stronger than the rest, and defended by giants living in castles, high rocks, &c. some of these giants our poet names, as *Corineus*, *Gogmagog*, &c. Here he proposed to moralize the old fables concerning *Brutus*, *Gogmagog*, &c.

Brutus, however, is opposed in his attempt by the priests, conjurers, and magicians; and



the priests are supposed to have had secrets, which pass for supernatural, such as the use of gunpowder, &c. He meets with many difficulties likewise from his own people, which interrupt his designs; particularly from one of his kinsmen, who is young, fierce, and ambitious. He is earnest for conquering all by force, and treating the people who submitted to him as slaves.

But Brutus gives it as his opinion, not to conquer and destroy the natives of the new-discovered land, but to polish and refine them, by introducing true religion, void of superstition and all false notions of the Deity, which only leads to vice and misery, among people who are uncorrupted in their manners, and only want the introduction of useful arts, under the sanction of a good government, to establish and ensure their felicity \*.

This turbulent kinsman likewise endangers a revolt, by taking away a woman betrothed to a Britain.

Some of Brutus's followers take part with him, and raise a faction, which, by his wisdom and firmness, he suppresses; and brings the discontented back to their duty, who at length unite with him against the giants, their common enemy. It must not be omitted, that the kinsman is represented as repenting of his secession,

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\* Here the poet could have had a fine opportunity of exposing the inhuman conduct of the Europeans, with respect to the Indians.



and much ashamed that Brutus, having left him a victim to female blandishments, went to war without him.

Brutus, in the end, succeeded in his enterprise against the giants, and enchantment vanished before him : having reduced the fortresses of superstition, anarchy and tyranny, the whole island submits to good government, and with this the poem was intended to close.

Such are the outlines of the plan, which have been extracted from the sheets before me ; and that nothing might be wanting to perfect it as an epic composition, our poet had prepared his machinery, and given names to his good and evil spirits. He observes, that both Scripture and common opinion agree in authorizing the operation of such spirits, as these employed for good ends, to advance the worship of the Deity and virtue ; and those for evil, to promote superstition and vice : and he adds, that they may be equally admitted under any dispensation, either Ethic or Christian.

Nor has our poet forgotten the *Dramatis Personæ*, of which some are taken notice of in this sketch, particularly that of *Brutus*, whose character is as perfect as human nature will admit. A most wise legislator, an undaunted soldier, a just, moderate, beneficent prince ; the example and pattern of kings, and true heroes.

That of *Orontes*, a young man next in command under him, of an impetuous nature, such



as Achilles, Rinaldo, Alexander; valiant, ungovernable, licentious, but generous; and when free from passion, good and humane.

That of *Pisander*, to contrast with Orontes, a very old man, the Nestor of Troy, who had seen three generations, being born before the rape of Helen, in the flourishing days of king Priam. Wise, cautious, eloquent; of great authority in Brutus's army, employed to tame the savages in Britain, and to unite the different clans of the good Britons, &c.

*Hipomedon*, a bloody, cruel soldier, always for violent measures; killed by the giants.

*Cloanthus*, a soldier seeking only plunder and lust, destroyed by a woman.

*Eudemon*, a physician, carried away captive, while yet a boy, at the taking of Troy, by Machaon, the son of Esculapius, who instructed him in his art, and afterwards enfranchised him. After the death of Machaon, he became highly honoured all over Greece; nevertheless, he leaves the court of Cretes, whose physician he was, out of love to his country, to follow Brutus. A character of uncommon philanthropy, learning and virtue, but devoted to the worship of Esculapius, out of gratitude to the memory of his son.

*Goffarius*, an artful politic prince, without virtue, trusting more to stratagem in war, than to force.



*Magog*, another Mezentius, a despiser of the gods; brutal, trusting to his great strength, without fear, conscience, or prudence.

*Corineus*, valiant, proud, bloody; but subtle, avaritious, and dissembling.

*Sagibert*, favourite to Goffarius, a gay agreeable young man; vicious, spirited and brave, such as the Duc de Joyeuse, killed in the wars against the King of Navarre.

*Hanno*, a man of a severe republican virtue, high spirit, and great knowledge of men and manners, from having been much abroad in his different commands.

Our Author had actually begun this poem; and part of the manuscript, in *blank verse*, now lies before me. But various accidents concurred, to prevent his making any farther progress in it.

He had likewise planned two odes, or moral poems, on the *Mischiefs of arbitrary Power*, and the *Folly of Ambition*. The first was to open with a view and description of Mount Etna or Vesuvius, after a long intermission from eruptions; in which was given a picture of all rural felicity, in the most enchanting scenes of vineyards and olive-yards in one place, the products of Ceres in another, and flowery pastures, overspread with flocks and herds, in a third, while the shepherds were indulging themselves in their rural dances, songs and music; and the hus-



bandmen in feats of activity. In the heat of these amusements, is heard the rumbling in the bowels of the mountain, the day is overcast, and after other dreadful symptoms of approaching desolation, a torrent of liquid fire breaks out from the mouth, and running down the declivity, carries away every thing in its passage; and, as Milton says——

“All the flourishing works of Peace destroys.”

That on the *folly of ambition and a name*, was to open with the view of a large champain desert country; in the midst of which was a large heap of shapeless and deformed ruins, under the shadow of which was seen a shepherd's shed, who at his door was tending a few sheep and goats. The ruins attract the eye of a traveller passing by, who, curious to be informed of what he saw, addresses himself to the shepherd, to know to what superb structures these ruins belonged. The shepherd entertains him with an absurd and fabulous account of antient times, in which there were such traces of true history, that the traveller at length discovers, by the aid of the fabulous narrator, joined to certain marks in the ruins themselves, that this was the famous Blenheim, built, at the public expence, by a warlike nation, for the Deliverer of Europe, &c.

It may be worth observing farther, that Mr. POPE once had a purpose to pen a discourse on the rise and progress of English poetry, as it came from the Provincial poets, and had classed the English poets, according to their several schools and suc-



successions, as appears from the list underneath.

Æ R A I.

RYMER, 2d part, pag. 65, 66, 67. 77.

Petrarch 78. Catal. of Provençals [Poets.]

1. School of Provence { Chaucer's Visions, Romaunt of the Rose.  
ierce Plowman, Tales from Boccace.  
Gower.

2. School of Chaucer { Lydgate,  
T. Occleve,  
Walt. de Mapes,  
Skelton.

3. School of Petrarch { E. of Surrey,  
Sir Thomas Wyat,  
Sir Philip Sydney,  
G. Gascoyn, translator of Ariosto's Com.

4. School of Dante { Mirror of Magistrates,  
Lord Buckhurst's Induction, Gorbo-  
duck,—Original of good Tragedy,—  
Seneca [his Model]

Æ R A II.

SPENCER, Col. Clout, from the School of  
Ariosto and Petrarch, translated from Tasso.

5. School of Spencer, { W. Brown's Pastorals,  
and { Ph. Fletcher's Purple Island, Alabaſter,  
From Italian Sonnets { Piſcatery Ec.  
S. Daniel,  
Sir Walter Raleigh,  
Milton's Juvenilia. Heath. Habinton.

Translators from Ita- { Golding,  
lian { Edm. Fairfax,  
Harrington.

6. School of Donne { Cowley, Davenant,  
Michael Drayton,  
Sir Thomas Overbury,  
Randolph,  
Sir John Davis,  
Sir John Beaumont,  
Cartwright,  
Cleveland,  
Crashaw,  
Bishop Corbet,  
Lord Falkland.

{ Carew, } in Matter {  
T. Carey, } Models to  
G. Sandys, } Waller.  
in his Par. } in Versifica-  
of Job } tion  
Fairfax, }  
{ Sir John Mennis, } Originals of Hudibras.  
{ Tho. Baynal, }



Having thus given an account of our author's most distinguished pieces, with such animadversions as occurred, it remains, according to the plan proposed, to consider the nature, force, and extent of Mr. POPE's Genius.

This office, as has been observed, has been undertaken in form by an ingenious Critic, whose remarks have frequently been taken notice of in the foregoing part of these sheets.

His work not being yet compleated, he has not hitherto positively determined in what class of poetical merit Mr. POPE is to be ranked. But from several scattered hints, and more especially from his dedication to Dr. Young, we may more than conjecture what rank he would assign him.

In this dedication, the critic expresses himself in the following terms——

“ I revere the memory of POPE, I respect and  
 “ honour his abilities; but I do not think him  
 “ at the head of his profession. In other words,  
 “ in that species of poetry wherein POPE  
 “ excelled, he is superior to all mankind: and  
 “ I only say, that this species of poetry is not  
 “ the most excellent one of the art.

“ We do not, it should seem, sufficiently attend  
 “ to the difference there is betwixt a man of wit,  
 “ and a man of sense, and a true poet. *Donne* and  
 “ *Swift*, were undoubtedly men of wit, and men of  
 “ sense;



“ sense ; but what traces have they left of pure  
 “ poetry ? It is remarkable, that Dryden says  
 “ of Donne, he was the greatest wit, though  
 “ not the greatest poet of this nation. *Fonte-*  
 “ *nelle* and *La Motte*, are entitled to the former  
 “ character ; but what can they urge to gain the  
 “ latter ? Which of these characters is the most  
 “ valuable and useful, is entirely out of the  
 “ question : all I plead for, is, to have their  
 “ several provinces kept distinct from each  
 “ other ; and to impress on the reader, that a  
 “ clear head, and acute understanding, are not  
 “ sufficient alone, to make a poet ; that the  
 “ most solid observations on human life, ex-  
 “ pressed with the utmost elegance and brevity,  
 “ are MORALITY, and not POETRY ; that the  
 “ Epistles of Boileau in rhyme, are no more  
 “ poetical, than the Characters of La Bruyere in  
 “ prose ; and that it is a creative and glowing  
 “ imagination, *acer spiritus ac vis*, and that  
 “ alone, that can stamp a writer with this ex-  
 “ alted and very uncommon character, which so  
 “ few possess, and of which so few can properly  
 “ judge.”

These reflections are specious, but, perhaps,  
 on close examination, they will appear to be fal-  
 lacious. That the most solid observations on  
 human life, expressed with the utmost elegance  
 and brevity, *may be* MORALITY and not POE-  
 TRY, is certain : but does it therefore follow  
 that they *must be*, and that there is a positive  
 contradistinction between them ? Surely if such  
 observations are embellished with beautiful  
 figures,



figures, illustrated by striking images, and the whole expressed in harmonious numbers; they cannot be denied a place among poetical compositions.

Had *Donne* and *Swift*, had *Fontenelle* and *La Motte*, of whom the critic speaks, with their *wit and good sense*, which POPE had in common with them, had the *supreme harmony of numbers* in common with him; would any man of common sense have denied either of them the character of a TRUE POET?

Mr. Voltaire, who may be supposed full as well acquainted with the nature of his own art as our critic, says, speaking of Mr. POPE, that to write *elegantly in verse* is the gift to one in a million, and that only to the TRUE POET.

It is not easy to conceive why *Morality* and *Poetry* are thus contradistinguished, as if it was impossible, that the *acer spiritus ac vis*, should ever be displayed on a *moral* subject.—But that they may, Mr. POPE's Moral Epistles sufficiently evidence; and the reader, it is presumed, from the passages above pointed out in these Epistles, will not hesitate to pronounce, that they abound with instances of true poetical spirit.

Having thus indirectly pointed out what he conceives the nature of Mr. POPE's genius to be, he proceeds farther to explain what denominates a poet.

“ It



“ It is amazing this matter should ever have  
 “ been mistaken, when Horace has taken parti-  
 “ cular and repeated pains to settle and adjust  
 “ the opinion in question. He has more than  
 “ once disclaimed all right and title to the name  
 “ of Poet, on the score of his ethic and satiric  
 “ pieces.

“——*Neque enim concludere versum*  
 “ *Dixeris esse satis*”——

“ are lines often repeated, but whose meaning  
 “ is not extended and weighed as it ought to  
 “ be.

“ Nothing can be more judicious than the  
 “ method he prescribes, of trying whether any  
 “ composition be essentially poetical or not;  
 “ which is, to drop entirely the measures and  
 “ numbers, and transpose and invert the order  
 “ of the words: and in this unadorned manner  
 “ to peruse the passage. If there be really in it  
 “ a true poetical spirit, all your inversions and  
 “ transpositions will not disguise and extinguish  
 “ it; but it will retain its lustre like a diamond  
 “ unset, and thrown back into the rubbish of  
 “ the mine. Let us make a little experiment  
 “ on the following well-known lines.

“ Yes, you despise the man *that is* <sup>(a)</sup> con-  
 “ fined to books, who rails at human kind from

---

(a) There are no such words in Mr. POPE, as those distinguished by Italics.



“ his study ; though what he learns he speaks ;  
 “ and may *perhaps* <sup>(b)</sup> advance some general  
 “ maxims, or *may* <sup>(c)</sup> be right by chance. The  
 “ cockcomb bird so grave and *so* <sup>(d)</sup> talkative,  
 “ that cries whore, knave and cuckold from his  
 “ cage, though he rightly calls many a passen-  
 “ ger, you hold him no philosopher <sup>(e)</sup>. And  
 “ yet such is the fate of all extreams, men may  
 “ be read too much, as well as books. We  
 “ grow more partial for the *sake of the ob-*  
 “ *server* <sup>(f)</sup>, to observations which we ourselves  
 “ make ; less *so* <sup>(g)</sup> to written wisdom, *because* <sup>(h)</sup>

(b) This word is *added* to destroy the metre, which is perfect without it :

“ Though what he learns he speaks, and may advance”—

(c) This word is likewise interpolated for the same purpose. The line in the Epistle stands thus :

“ Some gen’ral maxims, or be right by chance.”

(d) No such word in the Epistle.

(e) Two words are omitted here.

(f) Here is another interpolation, instead of an inversion. In the line in the Epistle there is no *of*.

“ We grow more partial for th’ observer’s sake.”

(g) No such word in the Epistle.

(h) The word *because* is not in the Epistle ; POPE says,

“ To written wisdom, as another’s, less.”

“ another’s :



“ another’s : maxims are drawn from notions,  
 “ and <sup>(1)</sup> those from guesses.”

“ What shall we say of this passage?---Why  
 “ that it is most excellent sense, but just as poeti-  
 “ cal as the *qui fit Maecenas* of the author who  
 “ recommends this method of trial. Take ten  
 “ lines of the *Iliad*, *Paradise Lost*, or even of  
 “ the *Georgics* of Virgil, and see whether, by  
 “ any process of critical chemistry, you can  
 “ lower and reduce them to the tameness of  
 “ prose. You will find that they will appear  
 “ like Ulysses in his disguise of rags, still a  
 “ hero, though lodged in the cottage of the  
 “ herdsman Eumæus.”

Though nothing, perhaps, could display a stronger proof of prejudice, than this method of determining the nature of Mr. POPE’s poetical Genius; yet I would by no means be thought to impute the want of candor to the critic, being

(1) The copulative is not in the Epistle.

I am far from suspecting the writer of any invidious intention, to pervert and falsify Mr. POPE’s writing, in order to establish a judgment injurious to his reputation: at the same time I must observe, that in the instances pointed out in the foregoing notes, he has been guilty of unpardonable inattention, to say no more. The reader will perceive, that instead of inverting and transposing, he has taken the liberty of adding to and altering the Poet’s expressions; which was not necessary in order to make prose of it: And there never yet was a poem penned which might not be rendered flat and prosaic, by such unjust and injurious liberties.

sensible



sensible that when the mind has once hastily adopted an opinion, it is too apt to seize those particulars only which favour its rash conclusion, and to be unmindful of every circumstance, which may tend to remove the first impression.

It is observable, that the instance here selected to shew that Mr. POPE had not the true poetical spirit, is taken from the opening of his Epistle on the Characters of Men: and, perhaps, its being the opening, might alone have afforded a reason against its being singled out to prove, what the critic would endeavour to infer from it. For the poetical spirit, the *vivida vis* is not to be expected, nay, perhaps, ought not to be conspicuous, in the very outset of a poem, more especially of a familiar epistle.

What farther proves the partiality of this examination, is the critic's challenging a comparison between a familiar epistle of this kind, and the two most finished *epic* pieces, perhaps, extant in any language. Surely, unless Mr. POPE meant to have descended to burlesque, it would have been very preposterous to have imitated in this epistle, the solemnity and dignity of the epopœia.

Our poet had transgressed common sense and decorum, had he displayed all that *acer spiritus ac vis*, of which our critic is so fond, in an epistle intended to represent the stile of familiar conversation. At the same time, our critic takes no notice of a thousand passages in the *Essay on Man*,



*Man*, and in the *Ethic Epistles*, &c. which, transpose and invert them as you will, breathe nothing but poetic fire and sublimity. Nay, he has paid the same inattention to numerous passages in these very Imitations. It would seem as if he thought that the true poet, was to write nothing but what bore the stamp of poetic fury and inspiration: And that our critic inherited the sublime taste of *Martinus Scriblerus*, who required every thing to be in the buskin or florid stile.

So when the *unpoetical* POPE says——

“ *Shut, shut the door, good John——*

Martinus the critic, would have had him say——

“ The wooden guardian of our privacy

“ *Quick on it's axle turn——*

Again, when POPE says——

“ *Tye up the knocker——*

Martin would wish the expression altered thus——

“ *Gag my loud-tongued gate.”*

To be more serious, however, it may be observed, that it is by no means just to try and determine our poet's merit, by a single instance, thus partially selected; and opposed to some of the most celebrated poems now extant.



It may be added, that there cannot be a stronger instance of a blind veneration for these admired pieces, than the bold challenge which the essayist has given, and which we need not decline accepting. There is so little necessity, however, of being industrious in the choice of ten lines from the eminent bards he mentions, that I will do what the critic has done by Mr. POPE; I will take the first ten lines from the beginning of each, and will try the effects of what he calls critical chemistry, by throwing them out of their metrical order,—and first on the Meonian bard.

Θεὰ ᾄειδε οὐλομενεὺς μνηνὶν πληγῆαδεω Ἀχιλλῆοι ἢ  
ἔθηκε μυρὶ ἄλγε' Ἀχαιοῖς δ' προΐαψεν πολλὰς ἰφθίμους  
ψυχὰς αἰδῖ, δ' τεῦχε αὐτὸς ἑλωρία Κυνέσσιον, τε πᾶσι  
οἰωνοῖσι, δ' βελή διός ἐτελείτο ἐξ ἔδη τὰ πρῶτα  
Ἀτρεΐδης τε ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν καὶ δῖος Ἀχιλλεύς ἐρίσαντε  
διασήτην. Τίς τ' ἄρ' ἰεῶν ξυνέηκε σφῶε μάχεσθαι  
ἔριδι; υἱὸς Διὸς καὶ Λητῆς, ὁ γὰρ χολωθείς βασιλῆϊ  
ᾤρσε κακὴν νῆσον ἀνὰ στρατὸν.

Let us now make the same experiment on the Mantuan Muse.

“ Maecenas incipiam canere hinc quid faciat  
“ aëtas segetes : quo sidere conveniat vertere ter-  
“ ram, et adjungere vites ulmis ; quae sit cura  
“ bovum, qui cultis pecori habendo, atque quanta  
“ experientia parcis apibus. Vos Liber et alma  
“ Ceres, O clarissima lumina mundi, quae ducitis  
“ annuum labentem coelo ; si tellus mutavit cho-  
“ niam glandem pingui Arista, et miscuit Ache-  
“ loia



“ *loia pocula inventis uvis vestro munere et vos*  
 “ *Fauni præsentia numina agrestum, ferte, &c.*”

Lastly, let us see how the great Milton will sustain this trial by inversion.

“ Heavenly muse, that on the secret top of  
 “ Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire that shepherd,  
 “ who first taught the chosen seed, how the heaven  
 “ and the earth in the beginning rose out of  
 “ chaos, sing of man’s first disobedience, and  
 “ the fruit of that forbidden tree, whose mortal  
 “ taste brought all our woe, and death into the  
 “ world, with loss of Eden; till one greater  
 “ man restore us, and regain the blissful seat.”

We are so far, in any of the foregoing instances, from discovering the appearance of any hero in his disguise of rags, that they rather present to us the image of a peasant, strutting in regal purple: and perhaps it is not too much to say, that they are inferior in spirit and dignity to Mr. POPE’S\*.

Never-

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\* Too many, it is to be feared, are apt to suppose, that high sounding words constitute the force and sublimity of poetical expression: and Horace himself does not seem exempt from this kind of mistake.

His authority, indeed, has been so firmly established, that it may seem presumption now to call it in question. Nevertheless, the instance by which Horace illustrates his own rules, is not, perhaps, the most happily chosen. In the passage of the satire alluded to, where he recommends the



Nevertheless, this tameness, admitting it such, ought not to be imputed as a blemish, in these admirable poems; for the beginning of a piece ought to be simple and modest. No one, who knows how to manage a Pegasus, would ever think of setting off full speed, the minute he mounted.

It would have been a fairer exemplification, if the critic had selected other passages, in which,

experiment of trying the spirit of verse, by inverting the order of the words, he says,

“ *Non ut si solvas; postquam discordia tetra*  
 “ *Belli ferratos postes portasque refregit:*  
 “ *Invenias etiam disjecta membra poetæ.*”

Now let any one transpose this passage thus:

“ *Postquam tetra discordia refregit ferratos*  
 “ *Poses portasque belli.*”

These words, indeed, are sonorous; but can they, by any possible arrangement, be rendered *harmonious* and *spirited*. Invert and transpose them how you will, the *poses portasque* will be flat: These words will hang upon the tongue, and their hissing will offend the ear.

It may be objected, I am well aware, that harmony is here out of the question; and that, though we destroy the harmony, yet the *acer spiritus ac vis*, which does not consist in measure, will nevertheless remain. To this it may be answered, that we are not here speaking of the *acer spiritus ac vis*, generally, but of the *VIS POETICA*; and wherever there is the *VIS POETICA*, there *SPIRIT* and *HARMONY* will be combined; and though you break the measure, which gives *perfection* to the harmony, yet the composition will still be to a degree harmonious: there will still be the *disjecta membra POETÆ*. For even *prose* may, by well turned periods, be rendered harmonious, as well as spirited.

even



even in the familiar Epistle under consideration, he might have discovered the true spirit of poetry; and of which the most distinguished have been selected in the foregoing critical examination.

In this very Epistle, for instance, if he had transcribed from verse 103 to 109, they might have afforded him an instance of animated and poetical lines; which, as has been observed, it is impossible to reduce to the tameness of prose by any inversion or transposition. Likewise, had he transcribed from verse 140 to 149, they might have furnished him with a farther example of true poetical spirit, which no inversion or transposition can disguise, or extinguish. Other exemplifications likewise might have been found, in this Epistle, and some of them have already been pointed out.

But perhaps the critic might object to these examples, as not being of that species of poetry which he deems most excellent.

“The *sublime and the pathetic*,” he observes, “are the two chief nerves of all genuine poetry. What is there,” he continues, “transcendantly sublime or pathetic in POPE? In his works there is indeed *nihil inane, nihil arcessitum; puro tamen fonti quam magno flumine propior*; as the excellent Quintillian remarks of Lycias. And because I am perhaps unwilling to speak out in plain English, I will adopt the following passage of Voltaire, which, in my opinion, as exactly characterizes POPE, as it does his model Boileau, for whom it was originally  
F f 3 “designed.



“ designed. INCAPABLE PEUT ETRE DU SU-  
 “ BLIME QUI ELEVE L’AME & DU SENTI-  
 “ MENT QUI L’ATTENDRIT, MAIS FAIT  
 “ POUR ECLAIRER CEUX A QUI LA NATURE  
 “ ACCORDA L’UN & L’AUTRE, LABORIEUX  
 “ SEVERE, PRECIS, PUR, HARMONIEUX, IL  
 “ DEVINT ENFIN LE POETE DE LA RAISON.”

The critic had before premised, that the species of poetry in which Mr. POPE excelled, was not, in his opinion, the most excellent one of the art: and here he points out the species to which only he seems to confine the excellence he admires.

The sublime and the pathetic, have, it is true, been allowed a superior degree of excellence, as being perhaps most generally striking and affecting: and *Horace* seems inclined to confine poetical excellence solely to the *sublime*, and to allow him only to be a poet---*cui mens diviniore et os magna sonaturum*, &c.

But terror and pity are more readily produced, than some are apt to imagine; and these being the sensations with which the mind perhaps is most easily impressed, poets therefore apply themselves most constantly to excite them; and thus often raise their own reputation, on the weakness of their readers.

With respect to the pathetic, however, it is a term usually confined to such ideas, as raise in us emotions of pity. But I much question, whether



ther the full power of the pathos, has ever yet been fully explained.

Any scene or description, that is exquisitely beautiful, is capable of impressing sensations analogous to the pathetic. We never view, or read of such objects, without feeling that kind of total relaxation, that enervate tremulous sensation, which we experience when we contemplate any object of distress or pity. No one, perhaps, of nice sensibility, can read that inimitable description of Paradise, in Milton, without being disposed to indulge an effusion of tears: yet here every thing is gay, elegant and riant: and the same effects, though not in the same degree, are found to result from different causes.

Notwithstanding, however, that these species of poetry apply most forcibly to our feelings, it may be doubted, perhaps, whether they ought therefore to be esteemed as most excellent.

That art is most excellent, which most immediately tends to accomplish the end proposed. The end of literary compositions, of every kind, should be to enlarge the understanding, and mend the heart. Man is to be considered as a creature compounded of reason, as well as passion. Now occasional strokes of the genuine sublime and pathetic, may successfully produce these effects; but when they become the constant attention of a writer, through a long laboured production, the one generally swells into unnatural inflation, and aukward bombast; while the other degenerates into unmanly soft-



ness and ridiculous whining: of which, we may be bold to say, the greatest writers furnish too frequent instances.

The reason is, that in these kinds of poetry, nature is generally represented in the *outré*. The imagination loves to be flattered; it always pictures to itself something more grand and more extraordinary, than it ever met with in reality: and there is always something in every scene, which falls short of the perfection it aspires to. This propensity is favourable to poetical enthusiasm, and is what gives such a peculiar relish to the sublime and pathetic. But to be extravagant, requires less skill than is usually imagined; and to describe nature in her genuine character, is perhaps the greatest effort of art.

In the history of human learning, imagination has always been assigned as the proper province of poetry. This has been so universally adopted, and taken in so wide an extent, that many have used the *licentia poetica*, without any reasonable bounds or restraint; as if it was, in no degree, under the direction and controul of judgment.

But, though poetry may be allowed, more than any other literary composition, to be addressed to the imagination; yet, if it is calculated to delight the imagination only, without being directed to any purpose, either moral or intellectual, it certainly does not deserve to be ranked among the most excellent species of poetry. In  
this



this case, what should be the mean, is preposterously made the end.

The pleasures of the imagination are more obvious, but they certainly are not so refined, as those of the understanding. The latter are attended with some increase of knowledge, on which the mind may, from time to time, expatiate by reflection. The former, though transporting for a time, are confined in their effects, and are quickly evanescent. The pleasures of imagination seem to hold a middle space between the gross enjoyments of sense, and the more refined delights of the understanding. All are, in some degree, capable of enjoying the two former; but very few have a relish for the latter: as very few are capable of such a stretch and perseverance of thought, as alone can render them grateful.

It is owing to the indulgence of this excessive license of flattering the imagination, that, at an advanced age, as judgment ripens, the greater part of poetry becomes insipid: and the truth of this reflection may lead us to determine the species of poetical composition which is most excellent; which is certainly that, for which our relish does not abate with the growth of our experience and understanding; that, which abounds with sentiment, and conveys useful truths with grace, precision, and harmony.

In fact, the true distinguishing characteristic of poetry, seems to consist rather in the style, than in the  
the



the matter. The essence of true poetry, is harmony. As to the faculty of the mind, to which it properly refers, that depends altogether on the nature of the various objects it treats of, and which are common to prose as well as verse.

Sublimity and pathos are not confined to poetry; since prose, as well as verse, may be sublime, pathetic, narrative, or descriptive; and may be directed to the imagination, or the judgment, as the subject requires. No man will venture to deny, that *Longinus* and *Quintilian*, *Locke* and *Newton*, &c. though no poets, were all men of imagination.

Admitting, however, that the sublime and the pathetic, are the most excellent species of poetical composition; yet, can it be truly said, that Mr. POPE did not excel in these?

If the critic means, that we do not find in POPE a poem, in which the *sublime* and the *pathetic* constitute the character of the whole: this is only saying, in other words, what every one knows, that Mr. POPE never composed a tragedy, or an epic poem. But, if he means to deny, that there are a thousand passages in POPE's poems, in which the *sublime* and the *pathetic* are displayed in their utmost force and perfection; this is a mistake that all who have eyes, or hearts, or heads, must be convinced of.

Does not the Messiah afford instances of the true sublime? Has not the critic himself allowed the



the lines, toward the conclusion of *Windfor Forest*, to contain strokes of genuine and sublime poetry? Can any thing be more sublime and pathetic, than several passages in his *Essay on Man*? as well as in the fourth book of the *Dunciad*; not to mention the *Verses to the Memory of an unfortunate Lady*, the *Ode to St. Cecilia*, and many other of his compositions, from whence several instances have been selected.

As to the pathetic in particular, the critic himself is forced to acknowledge, that the *Epistle from Eloisa to Abelard*, with the *Elegy to the Memory of an unfortunate Lady*, are truly tender and pathetic: and his feelings have, in many passages, extorted from him the most warm and involuntary confessions of our poet's excellence, both with respect to sublimity and pathos.

With what propriety then can he ask,—  
 “What is there transcendently sublime or pathetic in POPE?” when he has himself, with real taste and candor, pointed out so many instances of both the one and the other, in the course of his criticisms on little more than one volume of our poet's works?

Perhaps, however, he will not allow POPE to excel in these qualities, because he has only displayed them occasionally, and not made them his principal study and attention. But to determine whether a writer has a genius for the sublime, the pathetic, the descriptive, or any other mode of composition, it is sufficient that he



he shews himself capable of exerting those various powers, whenever the nature of the several subjects he treats of, requires that he should display them.

Mr. POPE has himself given us the reason why he did not cultivate those species of poetry, which chiefly delight the imagination. He rather chose to mix the *utile dulci*——

“ And stoop’d to truth, and moraliz’d his song.”

Or, as he elsewhere expresses it,

“ ————He turn’d the tuneful art

“ From sounds to things, from fancy to the  
“ heart,”

His strong sense, and moral cast of mind, having inclined him principally to cultivate didactic and moral composition, many critics have endeavoured to confine his genius to those kinds; and insinuated, with this essayist \*, that he did not excel in the other species of composition; and have therefore been ready to compliment him with the frigid encomium, which Voltaire has paid to Mr. Boileau, and which the essayist has transferred to Mr. POPE, by filing him, LE POETE DE LA RAISON. A compliment,

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\* Speaking of Mr. POPE's design of writing an epic poem, the critic intimates a suspicion, that so DIDACTIC a genius would have been deficient in that *sublime* and *pathetic*, which are the main nerves of the *epopea*.



which writers of luxuriant imagination and scanty judgment, may, without prejudice to their vanity, pay to those who have more sense than themselves.

But why should the critic apply, or rather pervert, Voltaire's sentiments, to express his judgment of Mr. POPE; which he modestly confesses himself unwilling to speak out in plain English? If Voltaire's authority is of any weight, the critic need not be told, that whatever Voltaire might think of Boileau, he entertained a very different judgment of Mr. POPE from that which the critic has passed, by transferring Voltaire's character of the former, to the latter.

We have already seen, that he complimented Mr. POPE as one endowed with a gift given to one in a million, and that only to the true poet.—But this is not all.—In a letter from England to one of his friends at Paris, he says farther of him,—“ I intend to send you one or two poems of  
 “ Mr. POPE, the best poet of England, and at  
 “ present of all the world. I hope you are ac-  
 “ quainted enough with the English tongue, to  
 “ be sensible of all the charms of his works.  
 “ For my part, I look upon his poem, called  
 “ the *Essay on Criticism*, as superior to the *Art*  
 “ of Poetry of Horace; and his *Rape of the*  
 “ *Lock* is, in my opinion, above the *Lutrin* of  
 “ Despreaux. I never saw so amiable an *imagi-*  
 “ *nation*, so gentle *graces*, so great variety, so  
 “ much wit, and so refined knowledge of the  
 “ world,



“ world, as in this little performance.” MS. Letter, Oct. 15, 1726.

Such are the sentiments of this celebrated foreigner, with respect to Mr. POPE’s poetical merit; and how much warmer would this panegyric have been, had Voltaire been master of the nicer beauties of the English language, in which Mr. POPE so eminently excelled. We find, that so far from thinking him *laborieux*, *severe*, he pronounces him a poet of what he calls *amiable* IMAGINATION and *gentle* Graces; master of great variety, wit, and urbanity——Qualities tending to perfect a poet, even in those species of composition, which our essayist deems most excellent.

Nevertheless, the essayist does not scruple to question Mr. POPE’s title to INVENTION and IMAGINATION. In the dedication, above taken notice of, he affects to speak of him rather as a *Moralist*, than a *Poet*; adding, that it is a creative and glowing *Imagination* only, which can stamp a writer with the latter character.

In another part, speaking of the Epistle from Eloisa to Abelard, he says---“ POPE was a most  
“ excellent IMPROVER, if no great original IN-  
“ VENTOR.” Again, in the close of his Examination of the *Rape of the Lock*, he thus expresses himself: “ It is in this composition, POPE prin-  
“ cipally appears a POET; in which he has dis-  
“ played more imagination, than in all his other  
“ works taken together. It should, however,  
“ be



“ be remembered,” he adds, “ that he was not  
 “ the FIRST former and creator of those beautiful machines, the Sylphs; on which his claim  
 “ to imagination is chiefly founded. He found  
 “ them existing ready to his hand; but has, indeed, employed them with singular judgment  
 “ and artifice.”

It is to be wished, that before the critic had passed these hasty censures, he, who is so well able, had previously defined the words INVENTION and IMAGINATION; or, at least, that he had premised what meaning *he* intended to convey by the use of those terms.

Definitions, it is true, more especially of abstract terms, are dangerous; and much ridicule has been thrown upon the unwary use of them. But it is indispensably necessary, however, that such as criticize or dispute, should make the world acquainted with the sense they annex to the terms they employ: otherwise they may cavil without end, and only create confusion, instead of begetting conviction.

Now *Invention* and *Imagination* are, at least, in my apprehension, terms, though nearly allied, yet somewhat different from each other; though they are frequently used indiscriminately, and confounded even by our critic himself; as it should seem by the following expressions.

“ The man of rhymes,” says he, “ may be  
 “ easily found; but the genuine poet, of a lively  
 F f 8 “ plastic



“ plastic *Imagination*, the true MAKER or CRE-  
 “ A TOR, is an uncommon prodigy.”

Here the critic seems to attribute the power of making or creating, to the *Imagination*, which more properly belongs to the *Invention*.

But the TRUE MAKER or CREATOR (says he) is an *uncommon prodigy*. I believe so. *Maker* of what? Not of Beings, nor Ideas. He may make Monsters: things which never did exist in one case, and which never can in the other. We can only combine the Beings and the Ideas which our senses present unto us. As *Maker* and *Creator*, in any other sense than a skilful Affociator and Combiner, the Man in Bedlam has the advantage of the truest Genius.

So that *Invention*, as applied to literary composition, seems to be nothing more than, the faculty of discovering certain relations among various objects; from whence we form a *new* and beautiful *association* of ideas: and we pronounce no man a *genius*, who does not excel in this faculty.

*Imagination*, on the other hand, is the faculty of illustrating and embellishing those ideas, by new, apt and striking images and figures. It is the office of imagination, to represent some truth to the understanding, as it were by reflection.

Thus it would seem, that imagination is but a proper attendant on invention. As genius is the faculty of forming new associations of ideas, so  
 imagination



imagination is the faculty of representing them by new images.

It is from imagination, that a writer derives the fire and enthusiasm, which, with respect to poetry especially, constitutes, among other qualities, what we call Genius. But to form a poetic genius, requires a happy concurrence of all the nobler qualities of the mind. The invention should be quick and fertile; the poet must be able readily to perceive the relations among various objects which present themselves before him, and to combine them, with such *curious felicity*, as to produce a striking and interesting union.

As this union, however, will be more or less obvious to others, in proportion as their powers of perception are more or less vigorous or languid: therefore the Poet's imagination likewise should be lively and ardent. He must be capable of impressing those ideas on different minds, by placing them in various lights, by the use of choice and strong images, and of figurative illustrations, decked with all the graces of an elegant, splendid and harmonious diction.

His judgment also, should be solid and correct. He must be capable of arranging his thoughts in a methodical train; of combining such only as have a natural congruity between them, of separating such as are dissimilar, and of applying them to their proper purposes, so as to produce a complete and striking union.



His taste, likewise, should be refined : he must be able to distinguish nicely what is beautiful, and to select such imagery as may be best appropriated to illustrate the ideas he would convey. He must know, likewise, how to preserve a just ordonnance of figures, and avoid the jarring clash of metaphors. He must discern also, what stile is most properly adapted to the various species of composition : otherwise he will be liable to mistake inflation for sublimity, conceit for wit, and gaudiness for elegance.

These are the qualities which form a genius in poetry, and of these Mr. POPE was eminently possessed ; though the ingenious critic seems to deny, or at least to question, his title to the most essential of them, that is, *invention*.

We are the more surprized at the critic's disputing Mr. POPE's just claim to this excellence, as he seems to entertain very just and liberal notions of the nature of invention ; where he says, how consistently with his judgment of Mr. POPE, let others determine —— “ That a  
 “ want of seeming originality arises frequently,  
 “ not from a barrenness and timidity of genius,  
 “ but from invincible necessity, and the nature  
 “ of things : that the works of those, who profess an art whose essence is imitation, must  
 “ needs be stamped with a close resemblance to  
 “ each other ; since the objects, material or animate, extraneous or internal, which they all  
 “ imitate, lie equally open to the observation of  
 “ all, and are perfectly similar.”

But



But the mistaken foundation on which the critic disputes, or at least doubts, the validity of our author's claim, betrays itself in his admitting that Mr. POPE has displayed more imagination in the *Rape of the Lock*, than in all his other works taken together; with this abatement, that he was not the FIRST former and creator of those beautiful machines, the Sylphs.

If by this is meant, that Mr. POPE was not the first who brought the Sylphs into *poetical machinery*, the observation, were it true, would have weight. But it is destitute of truth: for Mr. POPE was unquestionably the first who employed this *machinery*. He first discovered the relations between those imaginary beings of air, and the light fantastic objects he intended to ridicule. He first assigned those beings their several charges, directed their several functions, denounced their several punishments, and framed various new associations of pleasing ideas from this whimsical system: and if this is not INVENTION, it is difficult to say what is.

If, on the other hand, it is only meant that Mr. POPE was not the inventor of the *Rosycrucian system* of the Sylphs, this is true; but it is so far from arguing his want of invention, that, to have made such a system, was not only out of the province of poetical invention, but had it been brought into it, would have destroyed all its effect.

Poetical invention must have the popular belief to work upon, or it can never attain its end.



Could Homer have brought his gods, or Milton his devils, into poetical machinery, had they been the inventors of either system? No: They took them as they found them, ready framed for their purpose, by having become the objects of popular belief.

It is said, indeed, that there have been critics, in former as well as later times, weak enough to suppose, that Homer himself was the first inventor of his gods and goddesses. But surely what made him the admiration of the Greeks of his own and after times, was his giving them back, conveyed in the most splendid light, the image of their own minds.

But he who at present uses the pagan mythology for his poetical machinery, may be fairly charged with want of invention; because it has not only been pre-occupied, but has been so long used, that it is now worn out. For a *supernatural system* may be too old, as well as too new; and is alike unfit for poetic use, either when it has lost, or when it never had, the popular belief.

It is from this reason, that the antient mythology is become disgusting. We cannot now bear invocations to the muses. Apollo now no longer shines in the splendid sphere, to which the poets exalted him. Even Venus herself, though girt with her Cestus, must give up the power of inspiration; and her son, Cupid, now can wound no longer. We may indeed smile to see him in Anacreon, fluttering his wings, and pointing his  
arrows;



arrows ; but if a modern were to draw such a picture, we should throw it aside with disgust, and despise him as the pitiful copist of an exploded system.

What a Phenomenon of a poet then must he be, who, to affect the name of an Inventor, first conceives a system of faith for the people, and then, without waiting till it be received, founds all his *probable* adventures upon it ! The reader not being previously acquainted with the system, or with the nature of the Beings it comprizes, would be at a loss to conceive why such and such particular attributes and functions are assigned to each ; and such an attempt would rather shock, than delight the imagination.

Homer, the great Inventor, did far otherwise ; he took the popular religion as he found it, and employed the traditional tales, of which it was full, to convey to his readers, in all the majesty of numbers, and splendour of painting, the truest philosophy of the human passions and affections. This was that MAGIC OF INVENTION, which has so fascinated every age, from his own to the present.

Even the wild *Aristo* was not so far gone, as to have recourse to the moon for *Invention* ; though he sent one of his heroes, and might have sent many of his critics, thither for the recovery of their wits. He was not the first Doctor who advised this remedy. As grotesque a picture as he gives us of humanity, it was a true one of the times he lived in ; which were extravagantly depraved, by the romances of chivalry, and the legendary tales of the saints.



But to shew the false ground on which Mr. POPE's title to invention is brought into question, let us suppose a critic on *Newton* should say —  
 “ He had not much *physical Invention*. His  
 “ merit of that kind must rest on the *reflecting*  
 “ *Telescope*. Here he has shown more invention,  
 “ than in any of his works; and yet, even here  
 “ we must remember, that he was not the first  
 “ former of *Steel and Glass*.”

Though this may be thought too extravagant, to be said seriously; yet it is much less so, than the above objection to POPE's claim of invention. Had Newton first discovered the use of *steel* and *glass*, it had not spoiled his optical *Invention*, and had greatly benefited mankind; but had POPE been the inventor of the Sylphian System, he had been disabled from making any poetical use of the whimsies he had created; and had, moreover, injured society, by adding an overload to labouring superstition.

In short, a critic who denies our poet the merit of invention, because he did not invent the Sylphian System, might with as much propriety say, that Mr. POPE had no invention, because he did not make Miss Fermor's lock of hair, nor the scissars with which her gallant divided it.

One would be apt to suppose, that they who dispute Mr. POPE's claim in this respect, confined their ideas of *invention*, merely to the production of somewhat fabulous and fantastic, such as the stories of the *Centaur*s, the *Mermaids*, and *Sirens*, &c.  
 In



In the estimation of such, one would imagine that Ovid must be the prince of poets, as he is continually entertaining our imagination with the *speciosa miracula*, and is constantly teeming with a succession of monsters \*.

But they do not consider that the mind which first created these imaginary existencies, did not display greater, nor yet so great power of invention, as he who first introduced them into poetical machinery.

The first formation of them, was effected by the combination of a very few simple ideas. But to bring them into action, to prescribe their various provinces, to direct their several operations, and to deduce the moral resulting from their

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\* The right reverend and learned author of the Divine Legation of Moses, has shown, nevertheless, that even Ovid here was no Inventor, but indebted for his fables to the preceding Greek writers, who took them from the popular tales. The METAMORPHOSIS, his Lordship observes with his usual acumen, arose from the doctrine of the METEMPSYCHOSIS; and was, indeed, a mode of it, and, of course, a very considerable part of the Pagan theology: so that we are not to wonder if several grave writers made collections of them, such as Nicander, Boeus, Callisthenes, Dorstheus, Theodorus, Parthenius, and Adrian the sophist. Of what kind these collections were, we may see by that of *Antonius Liberalis*, who transcribed from them: thence, too, *Ovid* gathered his materials, and formed them into a poem, on the most sublime and regular plan, A POPULAR HISTORY OF PROVIDENCE; carried down in as methodical a manner, as the graces of poetry would allow, from the creation to his own times, through the EGYPTIAN, PHENICIAN, GREEK, and ROMAN histories: And this the elegant *Paterculus* seems to intimate, in the character he gives of the poet and his works.



respective agencies, requires a much more varied and complicated association of ideas.

It is in this light, that Mr. POPE may be said to have been master of as much *invention* and *imagination* as any other writer whatever. These faculties he has not only displayed in the *Rape of the Lock*, but they are conspicuous throughout the whole of his works. In his *Eloisa to Abelard*, what new and striking combinations of ideas! what splendid and variegated imagery! What delicate and pathetic sentiments! What easy and harmonious versification!

But if there are any so unreasonable to contend, that it is in the construction and conduct of a *fable* only, that a poet can be allowed the merit of invention and imagination, they cannot yet deny that Mr. POPE has eminently displayed these faculties in the *Dunciad*. In this beautiful ALLEGORY, ONE great intire action is exemplified, and conducted according to the laws of the Epopea: the poem has its *Hero*, its *Machinery*, its *Episodes*, with every requisite which constitutes the perfection of epic composition: and the first three books display the most fertile invention, and sportive imagination.

Nay, was there no other proof of our author's capacity to excel in fabulous composition, it might be collected even from the plan of the epic poem which has been set forth above, and which he did not live to execute.



But, however it may shock our critic's notion of poetical genius, I am inclined to consider the *Essay on Man*, as a master-piece of poetry. This may be esteemed the most excellent species of composition; and, though it inculcates the most *important truths*, it seems to have as powerful a claim to invention and imagination, as the best conceived *fiction*.

It required the utmost degree of poetical skill, to give spirit, grace and variety to severe method, abstract reasoning, and logical argument: and yet, with what beauty and elegance are the dry precepts of philosophy illustrated and embellished?

It would be very extraordinary to contend, that a *moral* sentiment, conveyed in poetical language, and harmonious numbers, was not poetry.

It is perhaps one of the strongest proofs of the excellence of this piece, that no work was ever more frequently quoted by readers of every class. There is scarce a line which has not been committed to the memory, both of the learned and unlearned. Many have no other system of morality, than what they have collected from this excellent piece: and though few are capable of thinking for themselves, yet all can readily repeat the admirable sentiments and precepts with which this poem abounds.

If we would know why this piece never fails to charm the reader to a degree of fascination,  
the



the reason is obvious ---- It is owing principally to the magic of POPE's versification.

As to the qualities of invention, imagination, judgment, &c. these, as has been intimated, are common to writers of genius in every kind of composition. But, I must repeat it, the truly distinguishing and essential characteristic of poetry is *style*. Let a writer possess a fertility of invention in the widest extent, let his imagination be ever so ardent and luxuriant, his judgment ever so chaste and correct, yet, if his versification is bad, no one can justly denominate him a Poet.

There is, if the expression may be allowed, a genius of style, which is an *indispensible* ingredient in the composition of poetical excellence : and to this Mr. POPE owes his superiority : a copious flow of expression, a correct glowing and splendid diction, and a ravishing harmony of numbers, were peculiar to our poet \*.

But from the exemplifications which have been given from his writings, in the course of these sheets, the reader will be able to judge of the

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\* In this sense the learned commentator said, and he said truly, that Mr. POPE spoke ominously, when he modestly called himself the *last* of his profession : He did not say, as our critic misrepresents him, " that all true genius died with POPE," for " though " there have been many pieces which seem to shew, that there is " no failure of poetical abilities," yet no one has hitherto been able to equal him in the harmony of his versification.

I would not, however, be understood to consider the merit of versification *alone* sufficient to constitute a poet. I am sensible, with Horace, that *non satis est puris versum perscribere verbis*. I only mean, that versification is the first and most essential requisite.



*nature, force and extent* of his genius. The nature of a writer's genius, is to be collected from his earliest efforts; and that of Mr. POPE appears to have been of the moral and contemplative cast; as we may conclude from his Ode to *Solitude*, the first production of his childhood.

No writer was ever more eminently qualified to excel in this species of composition. His correct and accurate judgment enabled him to apply the choice and various talents he possessed to the best advantage. The fertility of his invention never rendered his ideas crowded and confused: they are always clear, distinct, precise, pointed and pertinent: the vigour and vivacity of his imagination, never degenerated into wanton luxuriance. His images are lively, bold, and ardent; but apposite, elegant, and chaste. We seldom meet with a false mixture of metaphors; his figures are beautifully congruous and exact. The brilliance of his fancy likewise, was happily tempered, and never dazzled with the false lustre of gaudy conceit, and fantastic witticism.

In short, he held all the faculties of his mind in such due subordination, that many, perhaps, have been hastily led to suppose his *creative* powers (since such they are to be called) deficient, because they are so castigated by his judgment, that they were not so obviously predominant in him, as in some other great writers, who have occasionally given way to the *irregular sallies* of imagination, and the *wild flights* of fancy. The splendid marks of genius, which incline us to  
excuse



excuse the failings of others, give additional lustre to his writings : and his wit, only served to adorn his judgment.

It was to the accuracy of his judgment, and to the unwearied patience and application with which he polished his writings, that he owed that singular correctness which distinguishes them above all others. He corrected, as he somewhere says, because it was as pleasant to him to correct as to write : and what the great Sir Isaac Newton modestly said of himself, may perhaps with equal propriety be said of Mr. POPE : “ That whatever  
“ he had done worth notice, was owing to a  
“ patience of thought, rather than any extra-  
“ ordinary sagacity, which he was endowed with  
“ above other men.”

Our author used to say, that any thing would delight us after a little application \*. Nothing, he remarked, could be more dry than the study of antiquity; yet he once got so deeply into *Graevius*, and was so much taken with it, that he composed a treatise in Latin on the buildings in

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\* Nevertheless Mr. POPE was naturally indolent, as many men of superior genius have been; whom yet some ruling passion or other has brought forth into a very active life. In some, the love of money; in others, the love of power; in others again, the love of fame; has counteracted the dispositions which nature gave them. But though the love of *Fame* beat very strong in POPE's breast, yet, as may be collected from what follows, *Friendship* seems to have been his ruling passion. This, with other motives co-operating, made him perpetually busy in the world, though naturally disengaged and estranged from it.



Rome, collected from the writings of Graevius: which treatise is said to be now in Lord Oxford's library \*.

Such was his vigour and perseverance of mind, that the exercise of thinking was never a painful task to him: on the contrary, he complained in his last illness, that "the thing he suffered most by, was that he could not think †."

As to the *force* of his genius, it seems to have been equal to the correctness of his judgment; or he could never, under the age of twenty, have produced so masterly a performance as the *Essay on Criticism*; in which he has shown such uncommon acuteness and penetration; in which he has analysed the faculties of the human mind, assigned the proper province to each; given the most just and perspicuous rules for their various exertions; and conveyed the whole with the utmost strength and energy.

\* In truth, Mr. POPE was both an antiquarian and an architect, and neither in an inferior degree. There are, as has been observed above, some traits of the first kind in the Harleian Library; and no bad specimen of his skill in the latter science, may be found among his friends.

† Our Author and Dean Swift, being in the country together, had occasion to observe, that if men of contemplative turns, were to take notice of the thoughts which suddenly present themselves to their minds, as they were walking in the fields, &c. they might find many, perhaps, as well worth preserving, as some of their more deliberate reflections. They accordingly agreed to write down such involuntary thoughts as occurred, during their stay there: and these furnished out the maxims in Pope's and Swift's *Miscellanies*.

But



But the force of his genius, which is thus conspicuous in this early piece, is still more manifest in his riper productions. Had his genius been less vigorous, he could not, at any age, have commanded that depth, that compass, that elevation of thought, with that majesty and sublimity of diction, which strike us throughout the *Essay on Man*. He could never have displayed the secret workings of the human passions, have unravelled the intricacies, and reconciled the seeming inconsistencies of human conduct. In short, he could never have enriched a subject seemingly so unsusceptible of poetical embellishments, and have united ease and elegance with weight and dignity; he could never have thus smoothed the rugged paths of morality, nor, in a sterile dreary soil, have called forth all the flowery graces of the most smiling and luxuriant scene, by which he allured the reader to follow him with delight through the thorny maze of a philosophic system, had not his genius been as strong, as his judgment was solid.

With regard to the *extent* of his genius, it was so wide and various, that perhaps it will not be too much to say that he excelled in every species of composition. When we consider that the bold didactic bard, who in the *Essay on Criticism*, directs our judgment and improves our taste, in the pursuit of human learning: that the sublime moral poet, who in the *Essay on Man*, inculcates the most important truths, and enforces the solemn obligations of religion and virtue, is the same writer who sports in the  
*Rape*



*Rape of the Lock*, frolics in the *Dunciad*, and wantons in the *Wife of Bath*, and other looser pieces, we can scarce believe that the same author can be master of such various excellencies. What *Quintilian* said of *Homer* may be justly applied to our Author. *Hunc nemo in magnis sublimitate, in parvis proprietate superaverit. Idem letus ac pressus, jucundus et gravis, tum copia, tum brevitate mirabilis. Quid? in verbis, sententiis, figuris, dispositione totius operis, nonne humani ingenii modum excedit.* In short, we may safely subscribe to Bolingbroke's opinion, who pronounced our author's talents to be *Universal*: and we trust that our Critic's estimate will never be admitted as the just measure of Mr. Pope's poetical merit.

That a false taste should occasion very erroneous judgments is nothing strange: In the reign of Charles II. *Settle* was for some time a formidable rival to *Dryden*, nay, by some, thought the better poet.

Where there is no *true* taste to direct, the *bad* has a fair chance to be mistaken for, and so preferred to, the *good*. But one would hardly think, that, where true taste has directed to the good, it should ever so far blunder as to mistake the *good* for *better*, in the same species of composition. Yet *Quintilian* tells us that has happened. Even when arts were at their height in Athens, there were critics who preferred *Philemon* to *Menander*. *Habent tamen alii quoque comici et præcipue*



*cipue Philemon qui ut pravis sui temporis judiciis Menandro sæpe, prælatus est, ita consensu omnium meruit credi secundus.* This would be scarce credible, had not we seen, in our own times, fastidious critics, of true taste, prefer *Dryden* to *Pope*, though the former is certainly as inferior to the latter as *Philemon* was to *Menander*.

Having thus attempted a critique on Mr. POPE's Genius, exemplified from his writings, let us now return and pursue the history of his life.

It has been observed, that various accidents conspired to prevent his proceeding in the composition of the epic piece, which he had begun on the plan before exhibited. Among other things which might contribute to divert him from the pursuit, we may, perhaps, reckon the publication of many of his familiar letters, which having been brought into the world without his privity, he himself published a genuine collection of them in 1737.

This edition was undertaken at the particular request of Mr. Allen, and published by subscription; a method which our author declared himself not fond of \*. In a letter to this gentleman, he speaks of this publication, and assigns such motives for it, as reflect great honour on his moral sentiments.

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\* See printed Letter to Mr. Allen, dated 30th April, 1736.



“ I will put,” says he, “ the book to the  
 “ press in three weeks time, and determine to  
 “ leave out every syllable, to the best of my  
 “ judgment, that can give the least ill example  
 “ to an age too apt to take it, or the least offence  
 “ to any good or serious man. This being the  
 “ sole point for which I have any sort of desire  
 “ to publish the Letters at all, is, I am per-  
 “ suaded, the chief point which makes you, in  
 “ friendship to my character, so zealous about  
 “ them : and therefore how small soever be the  
 “ number so printed, provided I do not lose too  
 “ much (for a man of more prudence than for-  
 “ tune) I conclude *that work* will be done, and  
 “ that *end* answered, were there but one or two  
 “ hundred books in all.”

From the preface to this edition, we learn more particularly the cause and necessity of their being published at this time.—He had, it seems, been disagreeably used, by the publication of some letters, written in his youth, which fell into the hands of a Lady\*, who printed them in 1727, without his, or his correspondent’s consent. This treatment, and the apprehension of more of the same kind, induced him to recall as many as he could, from those who he imagined had

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\* This Lady was the favourite of Mr. Cromwell, who corresponded with Mr. POPE, and trusted the fair object of his fondness with the letters which passed between them. She being afterwards unfortunately pressed by necessity, did not scruple to commit these letters, with those of other correspondents, to the press.



preserved any. He was sorry to find the number so great; but immediately lessened it, by burning three parts in four of them: the rest he spared, not in any preference of their style or writing, but merely as they preserved the memory of some friendships dear to him, or placed in a true light some matter of fact, from which the scriblers of the times had taken occasion to asperse either his friends or himself. He therefore laid by the originals, together with those of his correspondents, and caused a copy to be taken, to deposite in the library of a noble friend; that in case either of the revival of slanders, or the publication of surreptitious letters, during his life, or after, a proper use might be made of them.

The next year, the posthumous works of Mr. Wycherley were printed, in a way disreputable to his memory. It was thought a justice due to him, to shew the world his better judgment; and that it was his last resolution to have suppressed those poems. As some of the letters which had passed between him and our author cleared that point, they were published in 1729, with a few marginal notes added by a friend.

Many volumes likewise had been published, under the title of Mr. POPE's Correspondence, with promises still of more; and open and repeated offers of encouragement had been given to all persons, who should send any letters of his to the press.

Several



Several had been printed in his name, which had been wrote an age ago by *Voiture*, others likewise which were never penned by him, and some addressed to persons to whom they were never written: counterfeited as from Bishop Atterbury to him, which neither that Bishop nor he ever saw; and advertised even after that period when it was made felony to correspond with the Bishop.

Among other mortifications of this kind, none seems to have affected him more than the publication of his letters to Dean Swift, which were published without his consent; and what is more strange, with the Dean's concurrence and approbation. Mr. POPE's chagrin at this unaccountable proceeding, is very feelingly expressed in a letter to Mr. Allen.

“ My vexation about Dean Swift's proceeding has fretted and employed me a great deal, in writing to Ireland, and trying all the means possible to retard it; for it is put past preventing, by his having (without asking my consent, or so much as letting me see the book) printed most of it.—They at last promise me to send me the copy, and that I may correct and expunge what I will. This last would be of some use; but I dare not even do this, for they would say I *revised it*. And the book-feller writes, that he has been at great charge, &c. However, the Dean, upon all I have said and written about it, has ordered him to submit to any expunctions I insist upon; this is



“ all I can obtain, and I know not whether to  
“ make any use of it or not. But as to your  
“ apprehension, that any suspicion may arise  
“ of my own being any way consenting or con-  
“ cerned in it, I have the pleasure to tell you,  
“ the whole thing is so circumstanced, and so  
“ plain, that it can never be the case. I shall  
“ be very desirous to see *what* the letters are  
“ at all events; and I think that must deter-  
“ mine my future measures; for till then I can  
“ judge nothing. The excessive earnestness the  
“ Dean has been in for publishing them, makes  
“ me hope they are castigated in some degree;  
“ or he must be totally deprived of his under-  
“ standing.— They now offer to send me  
“ the *originals* (which have been so long de-  
“ tained) and I’ll accept of them (though they  
“ have done their job) that they may not have  
“ them to produce against me, in case there be  
“ any offensive passages in them. If you can  
“ give me any advice, do. I wish I could show  
“ you what the Dean’s people, the women and  
“ the bookseller, have done and writ, on my  
“ sending an absolute negative, and on the  
“ agency I have employed of some gentlemen  
“ to stop it, as well as threats of law, &c. The  
“ whole thing is too manifest to admit of any  
“ doubt in any man: how long this thing has  
“ been working; how many tricks have been  
“ played with the Dean’s papers, how they were  
“ secreted from him from time to time, while  
“ they feared his not complying with such a  
“ measure: and how, finding his weakness  
“ increase, they have at last made *him* the in-

“ strument



“strument himself for their private profit;  
“whereas, I believe, before, they only intended  
“to do this after his death \*.”

It appears that he afterwards received the originals; for in a letter addressed to the same gentleman, a few months afterwards, he adds, by way of postscript——“It will please you to  
“know that I have received the packet of letters  
“from Ireland safe, by the means of Lord  
“Orrery.”

Such ill treatment made him extremely cautious in his correspondences; and in his letters to his intimates, he often laments the restraint it puts him under. Addressing himself to Mr. Bethel, he says——

“I know you are one of those that will burn  
“every scrap I write to you at my desire, or I  
“really should be precluded from performing  
“the most common offices of friendship, or  
“even writing that I esteem and love any man.”

In a letter likewise to Mr. Allen, after speaking of his intention to put himself to some inconvenience for the sake of serving a friend, he pleasantly adds——

“These letters will never come into our col-  
“lection, therefore let us commend ourselves

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\* He likewise complains of this indiscretion in his old friend, in a letter addressed to Mr. Warburton, which is printed in vol. ix. p. 337.



“ honestly, when we do or suffer any thing in  
“ a good cause.”

The unwarrantable publication of his letters at least did him the service to shew that he constantly enjoyed the friendship of worthy men; and that if a catalogue were to be taken of his friends and his enemies, he needs not to blush at either.

Many of these letters having been written on the most trying occurrences, and all in the openness of friendship, they afford a proof what his real sentiments were; as they flowed warm from the heart, and fresh from the occasions; without the least thought that the world should ever be witness to them. Had he sat down with a design to draw his own picture, he could not have done it so truly; for whoever sits for it (whether to himself or another) will inevitably find the features more composed, than his appear to be in these letters. But if an author's hand, like a painter's, be more distinguishable in a slight sketch, than in a finished picture, this very carelessness will make them the better known from such counterfeits, as have been, and may be imputed to him, either through a mercenary or malicious design.

After our author had published the Epilogue to his Satires, wherein he took leave of the public, his health growing daily more and more infirm, he was obliged to abate his application, and instead of meditating farther publications, he determined to give a more correct edition of his  
his



his works ; and to this end, in the year 1743, the intire Poem of the DUNCIAD \*, made its appearance by way of specimen. Our author made some progress in this design, but did not live to complete it. He had, for the greater part of his life, been subject to an habitual headach ; and to this complaint, which he inherited from his mother, was added a dropsy in his breast, under which he laboured in the latter part of his days, and at length expired 30th May, 1744, about eleven o'clock at night.

Just before his death, he fell into continual slumberings, and yielded his breath so imperceptibly, that the people who most constantly attended him, could not tell when he expired.

His body, pursuant to his own request, was deposited in the same vault with those of his parents, to whose memory he had erected a monument with the following inscription written by himself.

D. O. M.

ALEXANDER POPE, VIRO INNOCUO, PROBRO, PIO,

QUI VIXIT ANNOS LXXV. OB. MDCCXVII

ET EDITHÆ CONJUGI INCULPABILI,

PIENTISSIMÆ, QUI VIXIT ANNOS

XCIII. OB. MDCXXXIII

PARENTIBUS BENE MERENTIBUS FILIUS FECIT

ET SIBI. OBIIT AN. 1744, ÆTATIS, 56.

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\* The Fourth book was first printed separately in the year 1742.



The last line was added after his death in pursuance of his will; the rest was done on the death of his parents.

The present Bishop of Gloucester,, with a generous and amiable affection, has since erected an elegant monument, in the church of Twickenham, to the memory of his deceased friend: an engraving of which, the reader will find at the end of this volume.

Mr. POPE had long foreseen that his end was approaching, and he beheld the hasty progress of his infirmities, with manly fortitude and resignation. In his several accounts of his health to his private friends, he describes the desperate state of his constitution, without any unbecoming emotions, or unmanly lamentations. In a Letter to Mr. Allen, speaking of another disorder which did not prove mortal, he says——

“ I am in no pain, my case is not curable, and  
 “ must in course of time, as it does not diminish, become painful at first, and then fatal.  
 “ And what of all this? Without any distemper  
 “ at all, life itself does so, and is itself a pain,  
 “ if continued long enough. So that providence is equal, even between what seems so  
 “ wide extremes, as health and infirmity.”

In another letter to the same person, he says——“I am very sure I have not much  
 “ strength left, nor much life; all it can allow  
 “ me will be to see you, and (if I can stretch it  
 “ so



“ so far) one friend more abroad : In either of  
 “ your houses if I drop, I drop contented ;  
 “ otherwise Twickenham will see the last of  
 “ me.”

In a letter to Mr. Bethel, he likewise expresses himself on the same subject with a certain degree of unconcern and even pleasantry.

“ I am tied down,” says he, “ from any distant  
 “ flights ; a horse hereabouts must needs be like  
 “ a carrier’s horse, always in a road, for my life  
 “ (as you know) is perpetually carrying me be-  
 “ tween this place and London : to this narrow  
 “ horizon my course is confined ; and I fancy it  
 “ will end here ; and I shall soon take up my  
 “ inn, at Twickenham church or at Westminster,  
 “ as it happens to be my last stage.”

Again, addressing himself to the same person, he draws a most pleasing picture of the decline of life.

“ I would be very glad,” says he, “ methinks,  
 “ if after a friendship of so many years, in the  
 “ whole course of which no one mistake, no  
 “ one passion, no one interest has arisen, to in-  
 “ terrupt our constant, easy and open com-  
 “ merce, if it were yet reserved for us to pass  
 “ a year or two together in a gentle walk down  
 “ the hill, before we lie down to rest : the even-  
 “ ing of our days is generally the calmest, and  
 “ the most enjoyable of them.”

During



During the course of his illness, and in his last hours, he behaved with that composure and serenity which seldom fails to attend a pure conscience and elevated mind.

He seems to have risen superior even to his last infirmities. But two days before he died, he sat in the garden for three hours in a sedan; and took an airing in Busby-park, the very day before he died. He would dine in company, when many under the like circumstances would have languished in bed. One day being brought to table, he appeared so ill, that the company thought him expiring; which occasioned Mrs. Anne Arbuthnot, the excellent daughter of an excellent father, to exclaim, "Mercy upon us! " this is quite an Egyptian feast." Lord Bolingbroke, who was likewise present, seemed to be affected with the deepest concern at his friend's desperate condition.

Mr. POPE, however, not only beheld his approaching end with magnanimity, but he spoke of it with cheerfulness; in adoring the goodness of the Deity in the flattering hopes he has permitted nature to indulge men, even amidst the sense of the desperateness of their condition. "A dropsy in the breast, which is my case, I know to be incurable," said he one day to the present Bishop of Gloucester, "and yet I frequently catch myself in indulging, before I am aware, with this pleasing delusive hope." Which is more to be admired here, his piety or strength of mind!

Not



Not long before his death, having sent out several of his Ethic Epistles as presents to his friends, he pleasantly said---“ I am like Socrates, distributing my morality among my friends, just as I am dying.”

He preserved the same temper to the last.---- On the morning of his death, the physician who attended him, observed that his pulse was very good, and took notice of other favourable circumstances. To which our author answered with great calmness, and in a seeming vein of raillery, “ Here am I dying of a hundred good symptoms.”

Having attended our amiable author to his latest moments, it remains to close this history with a delineation of *his moral Character*. But first it may not be improper to gratify the reader's curiosity with some further particulars respecting his *person, temper, manners*, and other minuter circumstances.

As to his person, it is well known that he was low in stature ; and of a diminutive and misshapen figure, which no one ridiculed more pleasantly than himself. Nevertheless, his countenance reflected the image of his mind. His eye in particular was remarkably fine, sharp and piercing : there was something in short in the air of his countenance altogether, which seemed to bespeak strong sense and acute penetration, tempered with benevolence and politeness. This prepossession in his favour grew stronger when  
he



he spoke. His voice, even in common discourse, was so naturally musical, that he was called the *Little Nightingale* \* : and all who were acquainted with him, acknowledged that his appearance and address were perfectly engaging.

In his temper, though he was naturally mild and gentle; yet he sometimes betrayed that exquisite sensibility, which is the concomitant of genius. But though his lively perception and delicate feeling irritated by wretched ill health, made him too quickly take fire, yet his good sense and humanity soon rendered him placable. The hasty sparks of resentment presently expired; and his mind was superior to the dark malice of revenge.

In the manner of spending his time, he contrived to mix the useful with the agreeable. His chief amusement was his favourite Muse, though he sometimes applied himself to the sister art, Painting; in which, however, he does not seem to have made any remarkable proficiency, if we may credit his own jocular account of his progress in this art, in a letter addressed to Mr. Gay †.

But,

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\* Our author likewise had naturally a very fine ear; by the help of which, though he never learnt music, yet he generally judged right of the most celebrated compositions.

† “ I have been near a week in London, where I am like  
 “ to remain, till I become, by Mr. Jervas’s help, *elegans*  
 “ *formarum spectator*. I begin to discover beauties, that  
 “ were



But, in truth, notwithstanding his own modest estimate of his merit in this art, he had made a considerable progress in the execution, as may be seen by a picture of Betterton of his painting, now in the possession of Lord Mansfield.

With regard to the theory of the art, and his exquisite discernment of hands, when the most skilful have been at a loss; he used to say, that it was the only species of criticism which he understood perfectly. This enabled him to observe one great defect, in what he

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“ were till now imperceptible to me. Every corner of an  
 “ eye, or turn of a nose or ear, the smallest degree of light  
 “ or shade on a cheek, or in a dimple, have charms to dis-  
 “ tract me. I no longer look upon Lord *Plausible* as ridicu-  
 “ lous, for admiring a Lady’s fine tip of an ear and pretty  
 “ elbow, (as the Plain Dealer has it) but am in some dan-  
 “ ger even from the ugly and disagreeable, since they may  
 “ have their retired beauties in one trait or other about them.  
 “ You may guess in how uneasy a state I am, when every  
 “ day the performances of others appear more beautiful and  
 “ excellent, and my own more despicable. I have thrown  
 “ away three Dr. Swifts, each of which was once my va-  
 “ nity; two Lady *Bridgwaters*, a Duchess of *Montague*, be-  
 “ sides half a dozen Earls, and one Knight of the Garter.  
 “ I have crucified Christ over again in effigy, and made a  
 “ Madona as old as her mother St. Anne. Nay, what is  
 “ yet more miraculous, I have rivalled St. Luke himself in  
 “ painting; and as it is said, an angel came and finished  
 “ his piece, so, you would swear, a devil put the last hand  
 “ to mine, ’tis so begrim’d and smutted. However, I com-  
 “ fort myself with a Christian reflection, that I have not  
 “ broken the commandment; for my pictures are not the  
 “ likeness of any thing in heaven above, or in the earth  
 “ below, or in the water under the earth. Neither will  
 “ any body adore or worship them, except the Indians  
 “ should have a sight of them; who, they tell us, worship  
 “ certain idols purely for their ugliness.”

esteemed



esteemed the finest by far of Mr. Addison's poems, the *Letter from Italy* to Lord Halifax, which was, that whenever the fine arts of painting, statuary and architecture are the subject, they are all treated with such general encomiums, as shew the poet understood none of them.

On the contrary, we may observe, that where such things occur in Mr. POPE's poems, they are touched upon with such peculiarity and precision, as shew the writer was a master of the subject.

Among his principal recreations, we may likewise account the delight he took in friendly intercourse and social festivity. He had an exquisite relish for society, and was himself a most entertaining and elegant companion. His conversation was polite and chearful ; but so easy and unassuming, though open, that, in mixed company, a stranger might have been with him for months, without suspecting him to have had any superiority of parts, much less that he was of universal celebrity.

His various reading, and retentive memory\*, assisted by a habit of reflection, rendered him intelligent upon most subjects ; and his social disposition made him communicative. He had the art of relating the most trivial occurrences with grace and spirit : and he abounded with those facetious anecdotes, and those ready and sprightly turns, which enliven conversation.

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\* His memory is said to have been so tenacious and local, that he could directly refer to any particular passage in a favourite author.



Our author, however, was not formed for a public speaker. He has himself confessed, that he could never speak in public. "I don't believe," he was wont to say, "if it was a set thing, that I could relate any story to twelve friends together; though I could tell it with a great deal of pleasure to any three of them." "When I was to appear," said he, "for the Bishop of Rochester †, though I had but ten words to say, on a plain easy point, I made two blunders in them."

From this frank confession, it appears, that our author wanted that confidence, in which men of too exquisite sensibility are often deficient. The apprehensions which arise from the levities, the indecorums, nay, from the inattention of a public audience, would be sufficient to disconcert one of Mr. POPE's nice feelings: though, among a chosen set, he appeared equal to any effort of eloquence; being entirely disengaged and free from that awkward bashfulness, which the French properly call *Mauvaise Honte*.

He was indeed perfectly open, unaffected and affable in his manners. He never debased himself by an unbecoming levity, or servile accommodation: nor did he offend others, by an overweening arrogance and pertinacity.

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† See a letter from the Bishop, then in the Tower, to Mr. POPE, vol. viii. p. 126.



He did not betray any thing in his conversation or behaviour, which might afford any reasonable ground to tax him with vanity. He was so sensible of the folly of human vanity, that in his last illness, he observed to a familiar friend, that one of the things he had always most wondered at, was, that there should be any such thing as human vanity. "I had enough," he added, "to mortify mine a few days ago: for I lost my mind for a whole day."

He was, in general, happy, in an agreeable flow of animal spirits; and he used to declare, that he was not inclined, by his constitution, to be hippish. Nevertheless, his spirits never hurried him into any of those excesses or indecorums, into which too many are apt to be transported. He was not weak enough to imagine, with others of less pretensions, that his genius would justify every immorality, indecorum, and affected singularity of conduct. He was free, yet decent; lively, yet discreet. He never thought that his merit and reputation gave him a right to dispense even with the lesser duties or forms of social life. He perfectly well knew what belonged to others, and was exact in giving every one his due, without departing from the justice he owed to himself.

Though no one, as a writer, perhaps was ever more the subject of lavish encomium and illiberal criticism, yet few appear to have been less affected by either. He had a conscious dignity



nity of mind, which secured him from being elated by the former, or depressed by the latter.

He knew the just value of his own works ; and he was too well acquainted with the narrow limits of human capacity, to over-rate their merit.

If he was patient of just criticism from a stranger or an enemy, to that of a friend he was most resigned : and they who were best acquainted with him testify, that they never knew his equal in confessing his errors in composition, sentiment or expression ; or one who, with more unfeigned readiness and pleasure, would receive the corrections proposed. Add to this, that no man ever judged of others with more candour and liberality.

He seems to have entertained a kind of veneration for the character of a learned and virtuous man. His picture of such an one, in his *Windfor Forest* \*, is most highly finished ; and he no where, perhaps, discovers more enthusiasm, than where he speaks of the poets who lived and died near Cooper's Hill.

“ I seem thro’ consecrated walks to rove,  
 “ I hear soft music die along the grove :  
 “ Led by the sound, I roam from shade to shade,  
 “ By god-like Poets venerable made.”

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\* See from l. 234 to 256. It is worth observing, that notwithstanding our author's love of study and retirement, yet his better judgment taught him to place the studious, only next in degree to the active, life.



With the same fervor, as has been observed, he expresses himself in his Essay on Criticism, and other parts of his works.

His praise, however, was not confined to the dead; he celebrated living merit with a warm and heart-felt applause. Witness the generous tribute he paid to the genius of Addison, Prior †, and other cotemporary writers ‡.

But

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† Our author said, that the *Alma* of Prior was the only work that (abating its excessive scepticism) he could have wished to have been the author of. Yet, so unable, said he, are authors to make a true estimate of what they write, (either from their fondness for the subject, or the pains it costs them in the composition) that Prior asking him, soon after the publication of his works by subscription, how he liked his *Solomon*; he replied, “Your Alma is a masterpiece.” The other, with great impatience and resentment, replied, “what do you tell me of my Alma, a loose and hasty scribble, to relieve the tedious hours of my imprisonment, while in the messenger’s hand.”—This judgment of his friend, occasioned those two satiric lines in the small Poem of the Impertinent—

“ Indeed poor Solomon in rhyme

“ Was much too grave to be sublime.”

‡ His generous zeal extended itself to the cause of literature in general, as is manifest from the solicitude he expresses in a postscript of one of his letters to Mr. Allen, dated 14th May, 1737, concerning a Bill for the Encouragement of Learning, which had been then lately thrown out of the House of Lords, and which he had taken great pains to promote.

“ The bill, about which some honest men, as well as I,  
“ took some pains, is thrown out, for this session. I think  
“ I told



But it is his moral character which above all adorns and endears his memory.

In truth, his morals are the best comment on his writings: and they will be read with infinitely more pleasure and profit, when it is known that he felt and practised himself what he recommended to others. If we have reason to suspect from a writer's conduct in life, that he disregards the most essential principles which he inculcates with his pen, the mind revolts from his doctrine, and it hurts our pride to be the dupes of hypocrisy. To be truly useful and entertaining, a good writer should likewise be a

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“ I told you it was a better bill when it *went into* the House  
 “ of Commons, than when it *came out*. They had added  
 “ some clauses, that were prejudicial, as I think, to the  
 “ true intention of encouraging learning; and I was not  
 “ sorry the House of Lords objected to them: but it seemed  
 “ reasonable, that if *particulars* only were objected to, they  
 “ should be referred to a committee to amend them, and not  
 “ to *reject* the *whole* for them. But human passions mingle  
 “ with public points too much; and every man's private  
 “ concerns are preferred by himself to the *whole*. 'Tis the  
 “ case in almost every thing. It really was not mine, in  
 “ the part I had herein; and therefore I am not, in my  
 “ own particular, the worse, for the miscarriage of the  
 “ bill, and yet I am sorry for it: though if the general  
 “ purport of it be again brought in, another session, with-  
 “ out those clauses which were added by the Commons to  
 “ the original draught, I should be gladder that it was now  
 “ thrown out.”

The frequent and tedious litigations which have lately engaged the courts of law and equity, respecting the rights of authors, seem to evince the expedience of an act to ascertain the extent of such right, and to secure it from invasion.



good man. Such was Mr. POPE. In every relation of life in which we can consider him, whether as a son, a brother, a friend, or a citizen, he was equally excellent and praiseworthy.

His filial piety, was particularly eminent and exemplary. His affection and reverence for his parents, not only breathes in his works \*, but is conspicuous in his private correspondences †, and appeared on all occasions wherein he could express them.

The moral virtues are all derived from the same principle, and have a reciprocal dependance on each other. The man of true filial piety, is seldom deficient in other moral duties ; and Mr. POPE was not wanting in any.

No man ever entertained more exalted notions of friendship, or was ever more sincere,

\* See the conclusion of his Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot.

† In one of his letters to Mr. Blount, he says—" The question you proposed to me, is what at present I am the most unfit man in the world to answer, by my loss of one of the best of fathers. He had lived in such a course of temperance, as was enough to make the longest life agreeable to him ; and in such a course of piety, as sufficed to make the most sudden death so likewise. Sudden, indeed, it was : however, I heartily beg of God to give me such a one, provided I can lead such a life. I leave him to the mercy of God, and to the piety of a religion that extends beyond the grave."

steady,



steady, warm, and disinterested in all his attachments.

His heart was not, as he himself well expresses it, like a great warehouse, stored only with his own goods, or with empty spaces to be supplied as fast as interest or ambition could fill them; but it was every inch of it let out in lodgings for his friends.

His sentiments on this head were so refined, that in his idea of true friendship, he seems to have comprehended all the essential duties of civil life, and he frequently lamented that the instances of this virtue were so rare. In a letter to Mr. Bethel, bewailing the death of a common friend, he expresses himself with great strength and feeling on this subject.

“ He was a man,” says he, speaking of their deceased friend, “ of a better sort than most of  
 “ the present generation. A man *natus melioribus annis*, when gratitude, honour, and the  
 “ love of our country, were not made objects of  
 “ ridicule. A little seeming virtue in the profession of friendship, still remains; but the  
 “ misery is, that no man can have a sense of  
 “ his duty to his friend, who wants it for God  
 “ or his country; and such professions can be  
 “ depended on no farther than they advance each  
 “ others ends, or as long as two knaves draw  
 “ together. So that I fear friendship is on the  
 “ wing, when honour has taken its flight.”



Addressing himself likewise to Mr. Allen, he says---“ The sentiments you express upon the anniversary of your birth-day, shew you a good man, and therefore I have reason to be glad, that you can account the friendship I bear you, as one of the satisfactions of your life : otherwise it might be but a disgrace to be ranked among the things you like, if you liked such things and men, as many do like, and make their enjoyments. I trust in God such a friendship will out-last all those that are built upon vanity, interest, or sensuality ; the common grounds upon which people build them.”

At the same time, he used very feelingly to bewail the uncertainty of our judgment, with respect to the sincerity of friendship : particularly in a letter to Mr. Allen, where he says,---“ No true judgment can be here made of any man, or any thing with certainty, farther than that we *think* another man means well, and that we *know* we ourselves mean well. It is in this situation every honest man stands with respect to another, and upon which all well principled friendships depend.”

This uncertainty, however, did not degenerate into distrust. The feelings of his own heart were sufficient to convince him, that men of honour and sincerity, though rarely, were yet to be found ; and he expressed upon all occasions the most ardent affection for honest men, frequently lamenting the little union which subsisted among such.



such. Addressing himself to Mr. Bethel, he says—

“ A few honest people is all the world is  
 “ worth : but you shall never find them agree to  
 “ stand by one another and despise the rest ;  
 “ which, if they would, they would prevail  
 “ over the follies and the influence of the world :  
 “ but they comply with what is round about  
 “ them, and that being almost sure to be folly  
 “ or misery, they must partake of both.”

He was one day, in a conversation with the present Bishop of Gloucester, condemning himself for his undistinguished choice of friends in his youth. He said, if they sought his acquaintance, and could amuse or entertain him, it was enough ; he was too inattentive to their moral qualities \*.

In the course of this conversation, Mr. POPE added,--- “ I am now quitting my hands of these  
 “ unworthy acquaintance, as fast as I can, and  
 “ turn them off by dozens. Having found  
 “ they sought me out of vanity, and when en-

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\* In those times, Dr Arbuthnot, (whose morals were equal to any man's, and whose wit and humour, as POPE used to tell this friend, were superior to all mankind) one day said to him, “ What makes you so frequent with John of Bucks ?  
 “ He knows you have got money by Homer, and he wants  
 “ to cheat you of it.”—This suspicion, in the opinion of some, has been thought to have been warranted, by his persuading the poet to buy an annuity of him, when in the general opinion, there was not the least probability that he could survive his youth. But the seller over-reached himself.



“courage by their professions, I have asked  
 “any thing of them, for a man who was in  
 “reality what they pretended to be, had always  
 “some paltry excuse to evade their promises and  
 “professions. It was, says he, but the other  
 “day, that a noble Lord in my neighbourhood,  
 “who till then I had much mistaken, told me  
 “in conversation, that he had a large benefice  
 “fallen, which he did not know what to do  
 “with--Give it to me, said I, and I will promise  
 “to bestow it on one who will do honour to  
 “your patronage. He said I should have it.  
 “I believed him, and after waiting some time,  
 “without hearing farther of it, I reminded  
 “him of what had passed, when he said, with  
 “some confusion, that his steward had disposed  
 “of it, unknown to him or his lady \*.”

In his riper years he formed no connections through vanity; and though he lived among the great and wealthy, he lived with them upon the easy terms of reciprocal amity, and social familiarity †. But his familiarity with them never so

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\* The dissimulation and insincerity of those, whom, by a strange abuse of words, we call the great, is not without its use. It affords a profitable lesson to men of worth and abilities, to rely solely on their own industry, as the most effectual means to attain that sure and noble independence, which renders them superior to the neglect and insolence of exalted baseness.

† In one of his letters to Swift, he says, with honest frankness—“The greatest man in power of this sort, (meaning knaves, of whom he was before speaking) “shall  
 “hardly



so far corrupted his manners, or influenced his writings, as to induce him to flatter or dissemble. He courted none on account of their honours or titles; but was a friend to such only whom he thought distinguished by their virtues. He did not idolise their power, but respect their principles; as is evident from his attachment to the two fallen ministers Bolingbroke and Oxford; to whom he never offered incense in their prosperity; but paid them the grateful tribute of applause, after their disgrace. Not only his principles but his spirit, excluded him from all views of employing their influence to procure for himself either place or pension.

He seemed indeed to have entertained no very favourable idea of the motives on which the great, usually confer their favours. In one of his letters to Mr. Allen, speaking of his endeavours to serve a common friend, he says——

“ I am trying to serve that gentleman with  
 “ a great man, who declares the greatest esteem  
 “ for him, and presses much to be brought ac-  
 “ quainted with him : but I never trust entirely  
 “ in great men, though this has much of that,

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“ hardly make me bow to him, unless I had a personal ob-  
 “ ligation ; and that I will take care not to have. The top  
 “ pleasure of my life, is one I learned from you, both how  
 “ to gain, and how to use, the freedom of friendship with  
 “ men, much my superiors. To have pleased great men,  
 “ according to Horace, is a praise ; but not to have flattered  
 “ them, and yet not displeased them, is a greater.”

“ which



“ which generally animates them most to do any  
 “ good, *vanity*.”

In another letter to the same person, speaking  
 of Mr. Hooke \*, who had then lately been pro-

\* This gentleman seems to have possessed no small share  
 of Mr. POPE's esteem and friendship. His solicitude to do  
 him service, is strongly exemplified in the following anecdote.

“ The first Duchess of Marlborough was desirous of having  
 “ an account of her *public conduct* given to the world. This  
 “ Mr. Hooke, a Roman Catholic, in the mystic way, and com-  
 “ piler of the Roman History, was, by Mr. POPE and others,  
 “ recommended to her Grace, as a proper person to draw  
 “ up *the Account*, under her inspection; and by the assistance  
 “ of the papers she communicated to him, he performed  
 “ this work so much to her Grace's satisfaction, that she  
 “ talked of rewarding him largely, but would do nothing  
 “ till Mr. POPE came to her, whose company she then  
 “ sought all opportunities to procure, and was uneasy to be  
 “ without it. He was at that time with some friends, whom  
 “ he was unwilling to part with, a hundred miles distant.  
 “ But at Mr. Hooke's earnest solicitation, when Mr. POPE  
 “ found his presence so essentially concerned his friend's  
 “ interest and future support, he broke through all his en-  
 “ gagements, and in the depth of winter, and ill ways,  
 “ flew to his assistance. On his coming, the Duchess  
 “ secured to Mr. Hooke five thousand pounds; and by that  
 “ means attached him to her service. But soon after she  
 “ took occasion, as was usual with her, to quarrel with him.

“ Her ev'ry turn by violence pursu'd,  
 “ Not more a *storm* her hate, than *gratitude*.”

Thus Mr. Hooke represented the matter. The reason *she*  
 gave of her sudden dislike of him, was his attempt to pervert  
 her to popery. This is not without probability: for he  
 finding her Grace (as appears from the *Account of her Con-  
 duct*) without any religion, might think it an act of no com-  
 mon charity to give her his own.

moted,



motivated, he says--- “ He begins to feel the effects  
 “ of a court life, the dependance on the great,  
 “ who never do good, but with a view to make  
 “ slaves.”

He used his interest with the great, therefore, more to benefit others, than to serve himself: and no one ever enjoyed a more heartfelt pleasure in the service his talents and situation enabled him to render. The warmth with which he expresses himself on an occasion of this kind, in a letter to Mr. Allen, is truly amiable.

“ I can never,” says he, “ enough thank you  
 “ (my dear and true friend) for every instance  
 “ of your kindness. At present, I am loaded  
 “ with them, but none touch me more sensibly,  
 “ than your attempts for Mr. Hooke; for I am  
 “ really happier in seeing a worthy man eased  
 “ of the burthen which fortune generally lays  
 “ such men under, as have no talents to serve  
 “ the bad and the ambitious; than in any pleasures  
 “ of my own, which are but idle at  
 “ best.”

Indeed, he appears to have been zealous on behalf of his friends, even to anxiety. In one of his letters to Mr. Allen, speaking of two of their common friends, whose concerns were somewhat embarrassed, he expresses great apprehensions and uneasiness on their account; and then adds, by way of anticipating Mr. Allen's raillery---

“ Now



“ Now you’ll laugh, and ask me, why I will  
 “ make these things troubles to me, which will  
 “ probably soon be at an end, and are so little  
 “ so to them? I am so much the more concerned,  
 “ as I see them less so. But enough of  
 “ this. I should forget them, and I will whenever  
 “ God pleases; but I conclude it is not his  
 “ pleasure, till he makes me of another disposition.”

As he was faithful and zealous in his attachments, so he was slow and cautious in the choice of his friends; and particularly so in his connections with writers. Among these, he associated only with the most eminent; being of opinion, as he himself well expresses it, that

“ — Each ill author is as bad a friend.”

Addison, Swift, Parnelle \*, Congreve †,  
 Rowe,

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\* The following account of this ingenious man, and of those which follow, which Mr. POPE gave to the present Bishop of Gloucester, will not, I trust, prove uninteresting.

When Parnelle had been introduced by Swift to Lord Treasurer Oxford, and had been established in his favour by the assistance of POPE, he soon began to entertain ambitious views. The walk he chose to shine in was *popular preaching*: he had talents for it, and began to be distinguished in the mob-places of Southwark and London, when the Queen’s sudden death destroyed all his prospects, and at a juncture when famed preaching was the readiest road to preferment. This fatal stroke broke his spirits; he took to drinking, became a sot, and soon finished his course.

His



Rowe †, Steele †, and Gay, were among those whom he appears mostly to have esteemed. Sir

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His friend, Fenton, had the like ill hap.—Mr. POPE had a great intimacy with Craggs the Younger, when the latter was minister of state. Craggs had received a bad and neglected education. He had great parts: and partly out of shame for want of literature, and partly out of a sense of its use, he, not long before his immature death, desired Mr. POPE to recommend to him a modest, ingenious and learned young man, whom he might take into his house, to aid and instruct him in classical learning. Mr. POPE recommended Fenton; who was so taken in, and answered all the minister expected from him: so that Fenton had gained much of his favour, and of course thought his fortune made, when the small-pox seized the minister, and put an end to all Fenton's hopes.

† Mr. POPE esteemed Congreve for the manners of a gentleman and a man of honour, and the sagest of the poetic tribe. He thought nothing wanting in his Comedies, but the simplicity and truth of nature.

† Rowe, in Mr. POPE's opinion, maintained a decent character, but had no heart. Mr. Addison was justly offended with him for some behaviour which arose from that want, and estranged himself from him; which Rowe felt very severely. Mr. POPE, their common friend, knowing this, took an opportunity, at some juncture of Mr. Addison's advancement, to tell him how poor Rowe was grieved at his displeasure, and what satisfaction he expressed at Mr. Addison's good fortune; which he expressed so naturally, that he (Mr. POPE) could not but think him sincere. Mr. Addison replied, I do not suspect that he feigned; but the levity of his heart is such, that he is struck with any new adventure, and it would affect him just in the same manner if he heard I was going to be hanged.—Mr. POPE said he could not deny but Mr. Addison understood Rowe well.

‡ Mr. POPE used to say of Steele, that though he led a very careless and vicious life, yet he, nevertheless, had a real love and reverence of virtue.



John Vanbrugh \* likewise seems to have had some share in his esteem. But he seems to have entertained the most cordial regard for Gay, whose modest candor, and amiable simplicity of manners, chiefly endeared him to our author.

A congeniality of talents alone was not a sufficient recommendation to his intimacy; for he was more attentive to the worth and honesty of his companions, than to their abilities: and if ever he associated with such as were deficient in these requisites, it was because they had the art to deceive him, by wearing the appearance of those qualities which he most admired. That he was so deceived, and that he became a dupe

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\* Swift had taken a dislike (without knowing him) to Vanbrugh, and satirized him severely in two or three poems, which displeased Mr. POPE; and he remonstrated with his friend on this occasion. Swift said, he thought Vanbrugh a coxcomb and a puppy: the other replied, you have not the least acquaintance with, or personal knowledge of him:—Vanbrugh is the reverse of all this, and the most easy careless writer and companion in the world. This, as he assured an intimate friend, was true. He added, that Vanbrugh wrote and built just as his fancy led him; or as those he built for, and wrote for, directed him. If what he did pleased them, he gained his end; if it displeased them, they might thank themselves. He pretended to no high scientific knowledge in the art of building; and he wrote without much attention to critical art. Speaking with Mr. POPE of the Fables in the comedy of Esop, the latter said to him, Prior is called the English Fontaine, for his *Tales*; nothing is more unlike. But your *Fables* have the very spirit of this celebrated French poet.—It may be so, replied Vanbrugh; but, I protest to you, I never read Fontaine's Fables.



to specious and artful pretences of virtue and friendship, will appear hereafter \*.

Among his most intimate friends, and those with whom he corresponded with the greatest ease and familiarity, were Mr. Allen and Mr. Bethel; whom he loved for their real and unaffected goodness of heart: And to whom he opened his own, without reserve or affectation, not as a man of sprightly wit, but of friendly sincerity.

In a letter to the former he says—"I hope, dear Sir, I need not tell you the pleasure it will always be to me, to hear you are well and happy: Those words only, without form, without ornament, without all affected circumstance and compliment, are sufficient to make an honest man's letter to an honest man agreeable; and worth a thousand of the prettiest things that can be said by all the courtiers and wits of the world."

In a letter likewise to Mr. Bethel, in which he inclosed one to a common friend, he says---

"I am so awkward at writing letters, to such as expect me to write like a wit, that I take any course to avoid it. 'Tis to you only, and a few such plain honest men, I like to open myself with the same freedom, and as free from

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\* See, among other proofs, the note subjoined to the clause in his will, bequeathing a legacy to Mr. Allen.



“ all disguises, not only of sentiment, but of  
 “ style, as they themselves.”

In a word, he was the very SOUL OF FRIENDSHIP. He was never at ease, nor would let others be so, while any misunderstandings or strangeness subsisted amongst his friends, or while any of them was labouring under sickness or disease.

Mrs. Anne Arbuthnot has said to the present Bishop of Gloucester, that on occasions of estrangement among his friends, he was never at rest till he brought the parties together, among such common friends who had most power or art to bring about a reconciliation. And as the promise of his own company was a forcible inducement to bring his friends to concur with, or bear a part in his scheme of the proposed reconciliation, he would engage himself to twenty places, when he could not attend at one. On which occasions Mrs. Arbuthnot used to tell him, that he was a perfect male-bawd in promoting friendship, and was able to give lessons to those of her own sex, who dealt only in the affairs of love.

She used to add, that when a common friend was sick, her father \*, whose aid was generally sought for on these occasions, was necessitated carefully to hide himself from Mr. POPE, to

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\* It was in a great measure owing to the care and skill of this worthy man and able physician, that Mr. POPE, with so weak a constitution, was enabled to extend his life to such an advanced season.



avoid the teazings of his anxiety concerning the issue of the disease.

His zeal for the interest and credit of his friends was carried to that degree of anxiety, that he felt every circumstance which affected either, as powerfully as if the concern was his own. In his latest illness, he gave a remarkable instance of this friendly solicitude.

At the last time, when his intimate friend, the present Bishop of Gloucester, saw him, which was in bed, and one might say his death-bed, taking his leave of him, he said, "You know how often I have pressed you to print the last volume of the Divine Legation: your reputation, as well as your duty, is concerned in it. People say, you can get no farther in your proof. Nay, Lord Bolingbroke himself bids me expect no such thing. He says, indeed, you are master of the subject; but for that very reason you will stop, knowing it can be pushed no farther."

His love of virtue likewise was ardent and unfeigned, and appeared even in his latest moments. On the very morning of the day on which he died, he said to those about him,---"There is nothing meritorious in life, but virtue and friendship; and friendship indeed is only a part of *virtue*."

This, our author may truly be said to have exercised in every branch. He was just, punctual, temperate, generous, beneficent and grateful.



ful. His strict regard to justice and punctuality, appeared in all his transactions. He was exact, even to minuteness; and was quite free from the pitiful affectation of being thought too elevated a genius to descend to trivial concerns. The nice sentiments he adopted, with respect to punctuality, appear in one of his letters to Mr. Allen, where he says——

“ I remember, and like the saying of a friend  
“ of mine (no poet) That punctuality is a branch  
“ of moral honesty; and that an unpunctual man  
“ is a thief of his neighbour’s time, which he  
“ can never repay.”

Our author’s regard to punctuality, is in no instance more conspicuous, than in his agreements with the booksellers, concerning the property of his works. The several deeds and articles, which were executed on those occasions, now lie before me: and they shew with what precision, and scrupulous caution, our author entered into engagements, where punctuality was requisite.

It has, indeed, been publicly imputed to him, that he was in some respects over cautious in such contracts; and too attentive to dispose of his works on the most beneficial terms. But, in truth, he was by no means more solicitous to improve his fortune by his writings, than becomes every man of discretion, who is under the necessity of enlarging the narrowness of his income, by the extent of his talents.

He



He appears, in many instances, more especially after he was made easy in his circumstances, by the profit of his Homer, to have been perfectly indifferent on the subject of gain.

In one of his letters to Mr. Bethel, dated 2d November, 1736, speaking concerning the publication of one of his favourite pieces, he says,

“ I have not taken any care, more than I  
 “ think decent, about *saving myself harmless* in  
 “ the expence; nor do I see much taken; by  
 “ none so much as yourself, I assure you, hitherto,  
 “ considering the sphere you move in. I have  
 “ many awkwardnesses in it, and hate to speak  
 “ of it; ’tis really to no purpose to do it, but  
 “ to serve myself, which is a motive I am not  
 “ used to make my *sole* one.”

Nay, so far was he from being anxious to make the most of his writings, that he received subscriptions from his friends, with a kind of jealous suspicion; which proved that his delicacy was superior to every other sentiment.

In a letter to Mr. Allen, he says--- “ I will  
 “ allow you to remit the forty-five guineas,  
 “ which, you say, some of your friends, and  
 “ Leake, have *really subscribed*.”

The words in Italics were struck under by Mr. POPE in his letter, to intimate his suspicion, that his friend only pretended to remit the sub-



criptions of others, in order to conceal his own benefaction.

In short, Mr. POPE had nothing sordid or illiberal in his nature. He always happily preserved a due medium between parsimony and profusion. He was neither ostentatious nor niggardly. "He treated his friends," says Lord Orrery, "with a politeness that charmed, and a *generosity* that was much to his honour. Every guest was made happy within his doors; pleasure dwelt under his roof, and *elegance* presided at his table."

He was nevertheless extremely temperate, and, in general, avoided the delicacies of a sumptuous table. Neither the weakness of his constitution, nor his habit of study, would admit of his indulging any habitual excess. But from his numerous connections among the great, he was, nevertheless, sometimes obliged to submit to the inconvenience of irregular hours, and tempted to partake of a surfeiting variety. In some of his letters to his more familiar friends, he often blamed himself for his accommodation in these respects: particularly in one to Mr. Bethel, which he concludes thus---

"Take care of your health; follow not the  
 " feasts (as I have done) of Lords, nor the fro-  
 " lies of ladies: but be composed, yet chearful;  
 " complaisant, yet not a slave."

Again;



Again, addressing himself to the same gentleman, he says——

“ Since I came to London, I am not so much  
 “ in spirits, nor in the same quiet, as at Bath.  
 “ The irregular hours of dining (for as to  
 “ nights, I keep the same) already have disor-  
 “ dered by stomach, and bring back that heavi-  
 “ ness and languor upon me after dinner, which  
 “ I was almost entirely free from; though I still  
 “ continue to make water my ordinary drink,  
 “ with as little mixture of wine as before †.  
 “ I am determined to fix my dining to two o’  
 “ clock, though I dine by myself; and comply  
 “ afterwards with the importunities and civilities  
 “ of friends, in *attending*, not *partaking*, their  
 “ dinners.”

To the virtues of oeconomy and temperance, he united the merit of the most expanded beneficence. He has been heard to say, that he never saved any thing, unless he met with some pressing case of

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† We find, in a letter to Mr. Bethel, a facetious account of a conversation which Mr. POPE held with the famous Dr. Cheney on this subject. “ The Doctor, says he, magnified the Scarborough waters, and indeed all waters, but  
 “ above all, common water. He was greatly edified with  
 “ me, for having left off suppers; and upon my telling him,  
 “ that most of my acquaintance had not only done so, but  
 “ had not drank out three dozen of wine in my house in a  
 “ whole twelvemonth; he blessed God, and said, my conversation was with angels.”

This is no unpleasant ridicule of the bigotry of that other-wise able physician, to a consumptive regimen.



charity, that was an absolute demand upon him; and that then he retrenched perhaps forty or fifty pounds a year, from his own expences. For instance, said he, in a conversation on this subject, “ Had such an one happened this year, “ I should not have built my two summer-houses.”

His affection and generosity were conspicuous in his kindness to his sister, which was truly exemplary. She had imprudently involved herself in a law-suit, in which he supported her, and which in the end proved unsuccessful. His sentiments on this occasion, expressed in a letter to Mr. Bethel, are extremely amiable.

“ I thank you for your repeated offer in relation to my sister. I have furnished her with 150 l. and she has lost it, being cast in the law-suit (or rather, I believe *I* have lost it) But I shall be able to make a shift till more of my rents come in. It is right sometimes to love our neighbour, not only as well, but better than one’s self, and to retrench from our own extravagancies, to assist them in theirs. For it was meer folly of not making proper articles, that subjected her to this loss.”

But his beneficence to Mr. Savage \* alone affords a powerful proof of his humane and  
chari-

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\* This miserable man was born of the Countess of *Maclesfield*, who, living upon ill terms with the Earl her husband,



charitable disposition. This unhappy man, whose distresses were so various and of so singular a nature, was, in the latter part of his life, chiefly supported by Mr. POPE's bounty, who procured an annual subscription for him, to the amount of 50 *l.* per annum, of which he contributed 20 *l.* per annum himself.

The extravagance, profligacy and ingratitude of this unhappy man so estranged his friends from him, that most of them withdrew their subscriptions in resentment. Mr. POPE, however, had so much good nature and tenderness that he still continued his remittance, though he had good reason to be highly offended at his conduct, as we may learn from the following letter, which our author addressed to him on the 15th of September, 1742.

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band, did not scruple openly to proclaim herself an adulteress, by declaring that the child of which she was then pregnant, which was *Savage*, was begotten by the Earl of *Rivers*. From the moment of his birth, she conceived an abhorrence for the fruit of her infidelity; she disappointed him of the provision which the Earl of *Rivers* intended him, by making the Earl believe that he was dead. In his riper years, having unfortunately slain a person, in a scuffle at a brothel, he was convicted of murder, and when his friends interceded for his pardon, she, by a false representation, endeavoured to exclude him from the royal mercy. In short, this monster of a woman appears to have been incredibly unnatural. *Savage*, though but an indifferent poet, was not destitute of parts. His poem called the *BASTARD*, has undoubted merit; which indeed is always most conspicuous in those works which come warm from our feelings.



“ I am sorry to say there are in your letter  
“ so many misunderstandings, that I am weary  
“ of repeating what you seem determined not  
“ to take rightly.

“ I once more tell you, that neither I, nor  
“ any one who contributed at first to assist you  
“ in your retirements, ever desired you should  
“ stay out of London, for any other reason than  
“ that your debts prevented your staying in it.

“ No man desired to confine you to the  
“ country, but that the little they contributed  
“ might support you better there than in a  
“ town.

“ It was yourself who chose Swanzeey for  
“ your place ; you no sooner objected to it after-  
“ wards, (when Mr. Mendez stopt his allow-  
“ ance, upon complaint that you had used him  
“ ill) but I endeavoured to add to it, and agreed  
“ to send remittances to any other country place  
“ you pleased. Indeed I apprehended Bristol  
“ was too great a city to suit a frugal expence ;  
“ however I sent thither all I could, and now  
“ with as good a will, I add this little more at  
“ your desire, which I hope will answer your  
“ end you propose of making easy your journey  
“ to London.

“ I heartily wish you may find every advan-  
“ tage, both in profit and reputation, which  
“ you expect from your return and success ; not  
“ only



“ only on the stage, but in every thing you  
 “ shall commit to the press. The little I could  
 “ contribute to assist you should be at your ser-  
 “ vice there, could I be satisfied it would be  
 “ effectually so; (though intended only while  
 “ you were obliged to retire.) But the con-  
 “ trary opinion prevails so much with the per-  
 “ sons I applied to, that it is more than I can  
 “ obtain of them to continue it. What mortal  
 “ would take your play, or your business with  
 “ Lord T. out of your hands, if you could  
 “ come, and attend it yourself. It was only in  
 “ defect of that, these offices of the two gen-  
 “ tlemen you are so angry at, were offered.  
 “ What interest but trouble could they have had  
 “ in it? And what was done more in relation  
 “ to the Lord, but trying a method we thought  
 “ more likely to serve you, than threats and in-  
 “ jurious language? You seemed to agree with  
 “ us at your parting, to send some letters, which  
 “ after all were left in your own hands, to do  
 “ as you pleased. Since when, neither they  
 “ nor I ever saw or spoke to him, on yours or  
 “ any other subject. Indeed I was shocked at  
 “ your strong declarations of *vengeance* and  
 “ *violent measures* against him, and am very glad  
 “ you now protest you meant nothing like what  
 “ those words imported.”

On another occasion, he thus warmly ex-  
 postulates with him.

“ Sir, I must be sincere with you, as our  
 “ correspondence is now likely to be closed.  
 “ Your



“ Your language is really too high, and what  
“ I am not used to from my superiors ; much  
“ too extraordinary for me, at least sufficiently  
“ so, to make me obey your commands, and  
“ never more presume to advise or meddle in  
“ your affairs, but leave your own conduct en-  
“ tirely to your own judgment. It is with con-  
“ cern I find so much misconstruction joined  
“ with so much resentment, in your nature.  
“ You still injure some, whom you had known  
“ many years as friends, and for whose inten-  
“ tions I could take upon me to answer ; but I  
“ have no weight with you, and cannot tell  
“ how soon (if you have not already) you may  
“ misconstrue all I can say or do ; and as I see in  
“ that case how unforgiving you are, I desire to  
“ prevent this in time. You cannot think yet,  
“ I have injured you, or been your enemy : and I  
“ am determined to keep out of your suspicion,  
“ by not being officious any longer, or obtrud-  
“ ing into any of your concerns further than  
“ to wish you heartily success in them all, and  
“ will never pretend to serve you, but when both  
“ you and I shall agree that I should. I am, &c.”

From a letter which our author wrote to Mr. Allen, in which the foregoing letter seems to have been inclosed, it appears that Mr. Savage's unaccountable and ungrateful return, had made a strong impression on his mind.

“ Pray forward the inclosed to the simple man  
“ it is directed to. I could not bring myself  
“ to write to him sooner, and it was necessary  
“ to



“ to tell him how much I disapproved his language and conduct. What a pleasure it had been to me, had he been a better man, whom my small charity had been a true relief to; or were he less miserable, that I might bestow it better, without abandoning him to ruin.”

In a subsequent letter to the same gentleman, Mr. POPE apologizes for the emotions he expressed in his last.

“ My last short letter, says he, shewed you I was peevish. Savage’s strange behaviour made me so, and yet I was in haste to relieve him, though I think nothing will relieve him.”

Such was the humanity and generosity of our author, that his reflections on the sufferings of this unhappy man, outweighed the consideration of his demerits.

From the same humane and noble principles he assisted Dennis in his distress, and generously subscribed to his works, though he had offended him by the grossest abuse, and endeavoured to injure his reputation by the most illiberal criticism\*.

His

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\* In his last distresses, he wrote an inimitable Prologue to a play for his benefit. All serious encomium on the *fortune-struck* critic had been a joke; he therefore, by the most delicate pleasantry on the great critic’s past achievements,



His gratitude was equal to his generosity. He never forgot any benefit that he had received, or ever omitted an occasion of making a grateful return to his benefactor. Of this, we have a remarkable instance, in the ready zeal with which he applied to Sir Robert Walpole, on behalf of one Southcot, a priest of his acquaintance. Our poet, when he was about *seventeen*, had a very bad fever in the country, which it was feared would end fatally. In this condition, he wrote to this Southcot, then in town, to take his last leave of him: Southcot, with great affection and sollicitude, applied to Dr. Radcliffe for his advice. Not content with that, he rode down post to Mr. POPE, who was then an hundred miles from London, with the Doctor's directions; which had the desired effect.

A long time after this, Southcot, who had an interest in the court of France, writing to a common acquaintance in England, informed him that there was a good abbey void near Avignon, which he had credit enough to get, were it not from an apprehension that his promotion would give umbrage to the English court: To which this Southcot, by his intrigues in the Pretender's service, was become very obnoxious. The person to whom this was written, happening to

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ments, affected a very serious recommendation of him to the audience. And these strokes of humour were so delicate, and devoid of all acrimony, that Dennis, who was then blind and present, and to whom his friends avoided to communicate the knowledge of the author, heard it with great complacency as a serious panegyric.

acquaint



acquaint Mr. POPE of the case, he immediately wrote a pleasant letter to Sir Robert Walpole, in the priest's behalf: he acquainted the minister with the grounds of his solicitation, and begged that this embargo, for his sake, might be taken off; for that he was indebted to Southcot for his life, which debt must needs be discharged either here, or in purgatory. The minister received the application favourably, and with much good nature, wrote to his brother, then in France, to remove the objection. In consequence of which Southcot got the abbey. Mr. POPE ever after retained a grateful sense of Sir Robert's civility: and it was in acknowledgement of this favour, that our author always spoke of him with esteem and respect, and shewed his regard to him on all occasions, even at the time when it was the fashion to revile him\*.

Indeed the gratitude, benevolence, and humanity of our author's nature, were conspicuous in his last moments. He lamented, even in that

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\* Among other strokes of commendation, the following short encomium, in the Epilogue to his Satires, is most excellent.

“ Seen him I have, but in his happier hour  
 “ Of social pleasure, ill-exchang'd for pow'r:  
 “ Seen him, uncumber'd with the venal tribe,  
 “ Smile without art, and win without a bribe.”

These four lines did Sir Robert more honour, than all the panegyrics purchased with the wealth of the treasury.

extreme



extreme period, that he had so little to leave to his dearest friends ; and very pertinently quoted two of his own verses, which describe his life, as having been divided *between carelessness and care.*

In every, even the least intermission from pain, he was always expressing some kind sentiment concerning his present or absent friends ; which occasioned one who was near him to remark, that “ his humanity had out-lived his understanding.”---“ It has so,” said Lord Bolingbroke, who was within hearing : “ I never knew “ a man that had a tenderer heart for his particular friends, or a more general friendship “ for mankind.”

His Lordship never made a juster reflection. It was not only as a friend to individuals, that Mr. POPE's character appears in an amiable light. He had a sincere love for his country ; and a diffusive benevolence for the whole human race.

When we consider him as a citizen, and reflect that he lived amidst the rage of contending parties ; at a time when the constitution was scarce settled, and at a juncture every way nice and troublesome for one of his religion ; we can but admire the good sense and prudence with which he conciliated the esteem of all parties ; and the steady adherence which he constantly shewed to the essential principles of true patriotism.

Though,



Though, as has been intimated, it was unjustly surmised, from his intimacy with Swift, and others of that party, that he took a share in the political squabbles of those days; yet, it is now certain, that he never intermeddled with any public concerns.

His pen was guided by more noble and extensive views, than that of serving a faction or party. He expresses a manly and generous indignation of such narrow motives, addressing himself to Dean Swift, on the subject of party-writing.

“ God forbid,” says he, “ that an honest and witty man should be of any party, but that of his country. They have scoundrels enough to write for their passions and their designs; let us write for truth, for honour, and for posterity.”

He was so cautious, as not even to express his sentiments on those occasions, in his most intimate correspondences.

In one of his letters to Mr. Allen, he disclaims all topics of this nature.

“ The face of public affairs,” says he, “ is very much changed, and this fortnight’s vacation very busy. It is a most important interval; but I never in my life wrote a letter on these subjects: I content myself, as you do, with honest wishes for honest men to govern”



“vern us, without asking for any party or de-  
 “nomination beside. This is all the distinction  
 “I know.”

In another letter, he expresses himself to the same effect——

“I have nothing,” says he, “to tell you of  
 “public affairs. I never, I think, in my life  
 “was guilty of one letter upon those subjects,  
 “though no man wishes the public better. But  
 “I find all those that seem to design it best,  
 “better contented than ever.”

Nevertheless, our author testified great anxiety on account of the distracted state of affairs, which, from time to time, threatened mischief to the public. In a letter to the gentleman above-mentioned, he says,

---“The public is, indeed, more my concern  
 “than it used to be, as I see it in more danger;  
 “but your reflection and advice ought to alleviate those uneasy thoughts, when, to trust  
 “providence, is all I can do; and since my  
 “sphere is resignation, not action.”

At another time, he expresses himself very feelingly on the same subject.

“As this world,” says he, “is a place of no  
 “stability, of no dependance, I believe there  
 “is no honest man, who has any affections out  
 “of himself, but will always find more or less  
 “to



“ to be sorry for, or to wish otherwise; so I  
 “ own my mind troubled, whenever I reflect on  
 “ public disappointments, and the prevalence of  
 “ corrupt and selfish counsels.”

But in the following letter, he seems to have been more than commonly affected, by some alarming apprehension \*.

“ My mind,” says he to Mr. Allen, “ at present  
 “ is as dejected as possible; for I love my coun-  
 “ try †, and I love mankind; and I see a dis-  
 “ mal scene opening for our own and other na-  
 “ tions, which will not long be a secret to you.”

He was indeed a lover of mankind, and his diffusive benevolence forms the most amiable part of his character. His sentiments on this head were not penned for the public eye alone, but are expressed throughout the course of his private correspondences, with such unaffected feeling, as prove them to have been the genuine offspring of his heart.

In one of his letters to Mr. Allen, his reflections on universal benevolence, shew the extensive liberality of his mind.

\* The unhappy and unsuccessful war which a faction forced the nation into, in opposition to, and in order to destroy, Sir Robert Walpole.

† Our author's patriotic sentiments were so delicate, that whenever he made use of any foreign manufacture, he would say--“ Pardon me, my country; I offend but seldom.”



“ Dear Sir,

“ For you are always truly so to me ; and I  
 “ know your goodness so well, that I need not  
 “ be put in mind of it by your benefactions. A  
 “ man is not amiable because he is good to our-  
 “ selves only, but the more so the more he is  
 “ good to ; therefore, when we hear of benefits,  
 “ we ought to be as sensible of them as when  
 “ we feel them : Yet this is seldom the case : we  
 “ apply the terms of good, benevolent, just, &c.  
 “ merely as relative to ourselves, and are in this  
 “ as unjust to men, as philosophers and divines  
 “ are to God, whose ways and workings they  
 “ magnify or disapprove, according to the effect  
 “ they have on themselves only.”

His humanity and benevolence not only embraced mankind, but comprehended a feeling for the whole animal creation. He shewed very strong traits of this tender disposition in a conversation which he held with some of his friends, concerning the late Dr. Hales—

One of the company, speaking of the Doctor, said, “ I love to see him, he is so good a man.”  
 “ True,” said Mr. POPE, “ he is a very good  
 “ man ; only I am sorry he has had his hands  
 “ so much imbrued in blood.” “ What,” said  
 the other, “ he cuts up rats !” “ Yes,” replied  
 Mr. POPE, “ and dogs too.—Indeed he does it  
 “ with a view of being useful to man ; but how  
 “ do we know that we have a right to kill crea-  
 “ tures,



tures, that we are so little above, as dogs, for  
 “our use?”

It will not be matter of wonder, that a man who had such pure, such warm, such extensive ideas of benevolence, humanity, and every branch of moral virtue, should have a strong abhorrence and antipathy to vice.

This antipathy gave birth to his satires, which created him so many enemies; and which, though they did not produce all the reformation he wished, did nevertheless, perhaps, contribute, in some degree, to check the *growing* profligacy and licentiousness of the times in which he lived\*.

Such

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\* Mr. POPE died at the very opening of this scene, and so only saw the first movement of the *giant strides* he somewhere speaks of, but divined the rest. The monsters which made them were but just hatched, and it was some time after that their full horrors astonished the assembled public, in blasphemies too impious to be recorded. To these extreams of evil times, and to the countenance and protection these instruments of ruin met with, the Editor of Mr. POPE's works alludes, in the following words of his dedication to the third volume of the *Divine Legation*, the edition of 1765. As it contains a very graphical description of the then miserable state of things, it may be neither unentertaining nor unuseful.

—“I have detained your Lordship with a tedious story;  
 “and still I must beg your patience a little longer. We  
 “are not yet got to the end of a bad prospect.—While I  
 “and others of my order, have been thus vainly contend-  
 “ing *pro aris*, with the unequal arms of reason, we had the



Such who think it a violation of charity to stigmatize vice and vicious men, in the manner  
our

“ further displeasure to find, that our rulers (who, as I observed above, had needlessly suffered those ties of religion to be unloosed, by which, till of late, the passions of the people had been restrained) were struggling almost as unsuccessfully *pro facis*, with a corrupt and debauched community.

“ General history, in its records of the rise and decay of states, hath delivered down to us, among the more important of its lessons, a faithful detail of every symptom, which is wont to forerun and prognosticate their approaching ruin. It might be justly deemed the extravagance of folly to believe, that those very signs which have constantly preceded the fall of other states, should signify nothing fatal or alarming to our own. On the other hand, I would not totally condemn, in such a dearth of religious provision, even that species of piety, which arises from a national pride, and flatters us with being the peculiar attention of heaven; who will avert those evils from his favoured people, which the natural course of things would otherwise make inevitable: for indeed we have seen (and what is as strange as the blessing itself, the little attention which is paid to it) something very like such an extraordinary protection already exerted; which resists, and till now hath arrested, the torrent just ready to overwhelm us. The circumstance I mean is this,—that while every other part of the community seems to lie in *fiere Romuli*, the administration of public justice in England, runs as pure as where nearest to its celestial source; purer than Plato dared venture to conceive it, even in his feigned Republic.

“ Now, whether we are not to call this the interposing hand of Providence; for sure I am, all history doth not afford so much purity and integrity in one part, co-existing with so much decay, and so many infirmities in the rest: or whether profounder politicians may not be able  
“ to



our great Satirist has done, would do well to examine themselves, and reflect what it really is which gives them offence; whether it be  
a vir-

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“ to discover some hidden force, some peculiar virtue in the  
“ essential parts, or in the well-adapted frame, of our excel-  
“ lent constitution:— In either case, this singular and thin-  
“ ing phaenomenon, hath afforded a chearful consolation  
“ to thinking men, amidst all the dark aspect from our dis-  
“ orders and distresses.

“ But the evil genius of England would not suffer us to  
“ enjoy it long; for as if envious of this last support of go-  
“ vernment, he hath now instigated his blackest agents to the  
“ very extent of their malignity; who after the most villain-  
“ ous insults on all other orders and ranks in society, have  
“ at length proceeded to calumniate even the King’s su-  
“ pream Court of Justice, under its able and most unble-  
“ mished administration.

“ After this, who will not be tempted to despair of his  
“ country, and say with the good old man in the icere;

——— “ *ipsa si cupiat salus*  
“ *Servare prorsus non potest, hanc*  
“ *Familiam.*”

“ Athens, indeed, fell by degenerate manners like our  
“ own: but she fell the later, and with the less dishonour,  
“ for having always kept inviolable that reverence which  
“ she, and indeed all Greece, had been long accustomed  
“ to pay her august court of Areopagus. Of this modest  
“ reserve, amidst a general disorder, we have a striking instance  
“ in the conduct of one of the principal instruments of her ruin.  
“ The witty Aristophanes began, as all such instruments  
“ do (whether with wit or without) by deriding virtue and  
“ religion, and this in the brightest exemplar of both, the  
“ godlike Socrates. The libeller went on to attack all con-  
“ ditions of men. He calumniated the magistrates; he  
“ turned the public assemblies into ridicule; and with the  
“ most beastly and blasphemous abuse, outraged their  
“ priests,



a virtuous zeal, which cannot bear, without receiving scandal, to see their neighbour's faults publicly exposed, without public authority; or whether it is not possible that the offence they take may have another source, and arise from a secret uneasiness, often hid from themselves, to see vice severely handled.

To give a rule to discover the true principle and motive on which they judge, it may be proper to ask them, Whether, at the same time they are so scandalized at those who pull off the mask and expose wicked men, they feel the like offence at the vices which occasion the satire. If they say they do, we may allow them to be sincere in their censure, how ill-grounded soever it may be. But if they be offended only at the chastisement, and not at the crimes which have pro-

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“ priests, their altars, nay, the very established gods themselves.—But here he stopped; and unawed by all beside, whether of divine or human, he did not dare to cast so much as one licentious trait against that venerable judicature. A circumstance, which the readers of his witty ribaldry, cannot but observe with surprize and admiration; not at the poet's modesty, for he had none, but at the remaining virtue of a debauched and ruined people; who yet would not bear to see that clear fountain of justice defiled by the odious spawn of buffoons and libellers.

“ Nor was this the only consolation which Athens had in its calamities. Its pride was flattered in falling by apostate wits of the first order: while the agents of public mischief among us, with the hoarse notes and blunt pens of ballad-makers, not only accelerate our ruin, but accumulate our disgrace: wretches the most contemptible for their parts, the most infernal for their manners.”

voked



voked it, it is a sure sign that this parade of charity is all hypocrisy. In a word, bad men, as a great writer says, *persecute the good to gratify the blindness of their passions, whereas the good pursue evil men with all the temper and impartiality of a judge, and all the charity of a surgeon; who give pain only for the sake of the public, and the party himself.*

That such were the motives which actuated our poet, may be inferred from the disposition he shewed at the early dawn of his genius, and for a long time after. His first poems breathed nothing but amity and universal love. But his experience in the world inflamed his hatred against vice, in proportion to his love of virtue: And perhaps it is among the wisest of the schoolmen's maxims, which says—*Amor est odio prior, et odium ex amore oritur,*

When we reflect, however, on the numerous instances of vice and folly which surround us, and are proofs against the repeated antidotes of satire, we are apt to conclude, that it has no effect on the morals and manners of mankind.

But we do not consider, that, though a swarm of incurables crowd to our observation, yet the many who are benefited are imperceptible; and that some of them perhaps do not know themselves the hand which did them good.

If the pen of satire does but reclaim one, it is not employed in vain: and considering how many have got his works by heart, we cannot



doubt but that the satirical strokes with which they abound must now and then, at least, have had a good influence on their conduct.

In truth, the keenness of his satire so deeply affected the objects of it, that we need not scruple to believe the powerful effects of poetical chastisement recorded by the ancients. The jambic rage of Archilochus, could not have been more severe and effectual: though it is true, that he himself, as has been shewn above, lamented the inefficacy of his endeavours, and declined the office in despair of success.

In the latter part of his life, the general depravity of manners which he noticed, rather moved his contempt, than his resentment. Nevertheless, he sometimes very feelingly bewailed the treachery and perfidy he had experienced in consequence of the mistaken connections he had formed, and to which every man of warm attachments will be exposed. In a letter addressed to Mr. Bethel, he says—

“ I have lived long enough, when I have  
 “ lived to despise and lament the worthlessness,  
 “ perfidiousness and meanness of half my ac-  
 “ quaintance; and to see the dirtiness and dis-  
 “ honesty of those we thought best of. I dare  
 “ say you feel the same shock, and that neither  
 “ of us would chuse to stay an hour more on  
 “ the earth for their sakes or company.

“ It is a comfort, he adds, to me, that my old  
 “ and long experienced friend Lord Bolingbroke  
 “ is here, in case this should be my last winter.”

By



By this, and many other instances, which will be shewn, it will appear, that our author's partiality for his noble friend rose to a degree of frenzy and fascination: infomuch that in a conversation with a friend about the comet, which, at that time, was the subject of all men's attention, he said he should not be surpris'd if it was come to convey Lord Bolingbroke to some superior orb, as apparently he did not belong to this, just as a stage-coach stops at a man's door to take up passengers.

From his Lordship's behaviour likewise in Mr. POPE's last illness, as above related, one might reasonably conclude that the friendship and affection between them was reciprocal. No one, who recollects the account which has been given of the sympathetic tenderness and deep concern which his Lordship expressed for his departing friend, would believe that he would be the first, nay the only one, to throw dirt on his ashes, and asperse his memory by the imputation of a baseness, which his soul, above all others, abhorred—that of treachery.

But this will appear *less* extraordinary, when it is considered that his Lordship came early into the great world: and that what natural good principles he had, were corrupted by that political accommodation, that habit of dissimulation, which is, or is thought to be, necessary for those who fill the high stations in the active scenes of life. To this, perhaps, as well as to some constitutional causes, it was owing, that his Lordship's  
feel-



feelings were many of them affected, all of them transient.

Had his affection for his friend sprung from his heart, he would rather have drawn a shade over his *real* failings, than have perverted an innocent circumstance by all the malice of misrepresentation, as he did in the following instance; which properly falls into this part of the history, as it would be inexcusable to close the account of our author's moral character, without clearing it from the aspersions cast upon him by his FALSE FRIEND: For this purpose it will be sufficient to state the facts, and to suggest such vindication as naturally arises out of those facts.

In the year 1749, a treatise was published by Lord Bolingbroke, intitled Letters on the Spirit of Patriotism, on the Idea of a Patriot King, and on the State of Parties at the Accession of King George the First. In the preface to his treatise, a very severe aspersion was cast on Mr. POPE's honour and sincerity. For the writer roundly asserts, that those papers were written several years, at the request and for the sake of some particular friends, without any design of ever making them public: and he accounts for their publication at that time in the following manner. "The original draughts," he tells us, "were entrusted to a MAN on whom the author thought he might entirely depend, after he had exacted from him, and taken his promise, That they should never go into any hands, except those of five or six friends, who were named to him. In this confidence, the author  
 .. rested



“ rested securely for some years; and though  
 “ he was not without suspicion, that they had  
 “ been communicated to more persons than he  
 “ intended they should be, yet he was kept,  
 “ by repeated assurances, even from suspecting  
 “ that any copies had come into any hands.  
 “ But this MAN was no sooner dead, than he  
 “ received information, that an entire edition  
 “ of 1500 copies of these papers had been  
 “ printed; that this very MAN had corrected  
 “ the press, and that he had left them in the  
 “ hands of the printer, to be kept with great  
 “ secrecy till farther orders.

“ The honest printer,” he adds, “ kept his  
 “ word with him, better than he kept it with  
 “ his friend; so that the whole edition came at  
 “ last into the hands of the author, except some  
 “ few copies which this person had taken out of  
 “ the heap and carried away. By these copies,”  
 he continues, “ it appeared, that the MAN who  
 “ had been guilty of this breach of trust, had  
 “ taken upon him farther to divide the subject,  
 “ and to alter and omit passages, according to  
 “ the suggestion of his own fancy.”

This charge, it is true, was not published  
 directly by his Lordship. It was ushered into  
 the world by an editor, worthy of so dark an  
 office—One who, though he courted Mr. POPE,  
 while living, with a degree of abject servility, yet  
 has not scrupled to mention him, after his  
 death, in the grossest terms of rudeness. But  
 this editor, or to use his own language, this  
 MAN,



MAN, was never remarkable for the delicacy of his moral feelings.

As this charge, however, was published with his Lordship's privity and approbation, he is as much morally responsible for it, as if it came directly from himself. The imputation, it must be confessed, is of a very grievous nature, but when the particulars of the fact, the characters of the parties, together with other collateral circumstances, are taken into consideration, every unprejudiced mind will acquit Mr. POPE, of any mean or ungenerous design with respect to his friend.

That an edition was secretly printed, is not denied: but it is from the motives with which it was printed, that we must either censure or acquit Mr. POPE.

It happens that the *internal* evidence, which accompanies some particular facts, often bespeaks the intention of the agent with greater certainty, than all the *external* circumstances of positive proof, which can be adduced. Of this nature is the charge imputed to Mr. POPE. It is not pretended that any present use or advantage was made of the impression, nor was it likely that any could be derived from it, but on the presumption of Mr. POPE's surviving his noble friend. An event, which, considering the crazy state of Mr. POPE's constitution, was much too distant and uncertain, for him to entertain any reasonable expectations of such future profit.

The



The expence of printing it was certain : The expectation of gain was uncertain. Admitting it to have been ever so sure : the prospect was still very distant, and the expected profit could never arise but upon the contingency of Mr. POPE's being the survivor, of which, as has been intimated, the chance was against our author.

Besides, had Mr. POPE considered this as the least breach of trust, or violation of faith and friendship, he would never have bequeathed his papers to his Lordship's care, nor have made him his executor : and by that means have thrown the impression into his hands. On the contrary, had he been conscious of any thing treacherous or even indelicate, he would, no doubt, have ordered the impression to be destroyed. Nay, had he ever harboured any intentions that were base and perfidious, he would never have suffered the printer to have continued master of the proofs of his treachery, but would, from the first, have taken the copies into his own possession. Add to this, that Mr. POPE's fortune was such, as placed him far above the little temptation of benefiting himself by such a base and sordid attempt. It is more reasonable therefore to suppose that Mr. POPE took this step out of fondness for his friend, and partiality for the merits of a treatise, which at best contains little more than common-placed declamation.

The pretence given by his Lordship therefore, for this cruel treatment of his friend's memory,



mory, was all feigned; the root of which has been partly shewn, and will be further explained. For this *Patriot Prince*, as it was first called, and afterwards the *Patriot King*, was a very innocent performance which might have been proclaimed at the market-cross, and nothing but its insignificancy could make the author averse to its publication; for the liberty Mr. POPE took of *altering and omitting passages*, of which he is accused in this infamous advertisement, was only to strike out some insults on the throne, and the then reigning monarch. This Patriot Prince, in short, is no better than a mere school declamation, which acquaints the world with this important secret, That if *a prince could be once brought to love his country, he would always act for the good of it* \*.

Mr. POPE however, who was partial to this piece, no doubt considered his friend's injunction, as a kind of modest reluctance, to which he

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\* An eminent person, now a prelate of the church, had the honour of entertaining the present K. of P. when he was in England, by the name of Count Poniatowski; and chancing to ask him the character of a project for reforming the kingdom of Poland, published by a great personage of that kingdom, the Count replied, "It is much of the character of your Bolingbroke's Declamation, called the *Patriot Prince*, which is saying just nothing." This was well and wisely observed. For to do any thing to the purpose towards obtaining so happy an event, is not to shew how men might be so new modelled as to ensure the happiness of society, but to shew, if the writer can, how man, as he exists at present, may be made instrumental, by turning his natural passions and affections to a right bias, to the procuring this happiness.



might offer violence, without the fear of giving offence, or the apprehension of incurring censure. He probably recollected that the friends of Virgil, had published the *Eneid* even against his dying request, and that, by disregarding his will, they had immortalized his fame. Nay, it is to be more than suspected that he did not print this edition without the knowledge and consent of his noble friend : however the latter might afterwards make this a pretence for indulging his spleen and resentment against the dead poet, whom he dared not to attack while living.

That his Lordship harboured such latent resentment against him, is not to be doubted ; and it arose partly from Mr. POPE's reform of his *Essay on Man*, in opposition to his Lordship's system, of which an account has been already given, and partly from his friendly sincerity, on another occasion, which mortified his Lordship's excessive vanity, as appears from the following anecdote, which is extracted from a work already mentioned, intitled " A View of Lord Bolingbroke's Philosophy."

About the year 1742, some time before his Lordship's return to England, Mr. Warburton was with Mr. POPE, at Twickenham, who shewed him a printed book of *Letters on the study and use of history*, and desired his opinion of it. It was the first volume of the work since published under that name. Mr. Warburton on turning it over, told him his thoughts of it with  
great



great freedom. What he said to Mr. POPE of the main subject is not material, but of the digression concerning the authenticity of the Old Testament, he observed to his friend, that the author's arguments, poor as they were, were all borrowed from other writers; and had been confuted again and again, to the entire satisfaction of the learned world: that the author of these letters, who ever he was, had mistaken some of those reasonings; had misrepresented others, and had added such mistakes of his own, as must discredit him with the learned, and dishonour him with all honest men: that therefore, as he understood the author was his friend, he could not do him a better service than to advise him to strike out this *digression*; which had nothing to do with his subject, and would set half his readers against the work, whenever it should be published. Mr. POPE said his friend (whose name he kept secret) was the most candid of men, and that Mr. Warburton could not do him a greater pleasure than to tell him his thoughts freely on this occasion. He urged this so warmly, that his friend complied, and, as they were then alone, scribbled over half a dozen sheets of paper before he rose from the table at which they were sitting. Mr. POPE having read what he had written, approved it: and to convince him that he did so, he took up the printed volume, and crossed out the whole *digression* with his pen. The animadversions were written with all the civility the writer was likely to use to a friend Mr. POPE appeared to reverence, but the word *prevarication*, or something like it, chanced to escape



escape his pen. The papers were sent to Paris, and received with unparalleled indignation. Little broke out; but something did; and Mr. POPE found he had not paid his court by this officious service. However, with regard to the writer of the papers, all was carried, when his Lordship came over, (as he soon afterwards did) with singular politeness; and such a strain of compliment, as men are wont to bestow on those, whose homage they intend to gain. Yet all this time, his Lordship was meditating and compiling an angry and elaborate answer to these private, hasty and well meant animadversions. And it was as much as they could do, who had most interest with him, to persuade him at length to burn it. The event has since shewn, that it had been happy for his Lordship's reputation, had the advice to strike out the digression been followed, as it is that chiefly which has sunk him in the popular opinion, and lost him the merit of the very best of all his compositions.

Mr. POPE, nevertheless, was still courted and caressed: and the vengeance treasured up against him for the impiety of erasing those sacred pages, broke not out till the poet's death.

It is not to be wondered that his Lordship should harbour such a pitiful resentment, when his character is considered; which was vain, arrogant, and vindictive. Being disappointed in his views of taking the lead in the political world, he as vainly attempted to preside in the literary republic: and as he could not endure



a colleague in politics, neither could he bear a rival in letters. To be opposed in either, mortified his pride, and provoked his malice; and he became the CALUMNIATOR of his friend, from the same principle that he turned a rebel to his country. Mr. POPE's better judgment might have taught him, that the man who was false to his public, would never be true to his private, connexions.

But Mr. POPE, on the other hand, was candid, open, sincere, and free from the little malice of envious competition. Add to this, that he had a kind of reverential regard, and a blind partiality for this unworthy friend, as may be collected from what has been already mentioned, but more particularly from the following passages.—In a letter from Mr. POPE to Mr. Allen, he says—

“ I am now alone; Lord Bolingbroke executed  
 “ his deeds for the sale of Dawley on Friday,  
 “ and set sail the next day for France from  
 “ Greenwich. God knows if ever I may see  
 “ again the greatest man I ever knew, and one  
 “ of the best friends. But this I know that no  
 “ man is so well worth taking any journey to  
 “ see, to any man who truly knows what he is.  
 “ I have done so these thirty years, and CANNOT  
 “ BE DECEIVED IN THIS POINT, whatever  
 “ I may be in any other man's Character.”

The same partial infatuation appears in one of his letters to Mr. Bethel, where he says,----

“ Lord



“ Lord Bolingbroke has at length succeeded to  
 “ his father’s estate, and is now in England for a  
 “ fortnight or three weeks. I believe it will be  
 “ the last time he will see his native country ;  
 “ and I should be a worse man than I am, if  
 “ this were not a sensible concern to me, on  
 “ many accounts, since no man, I am per-  
 “ suaded, is so capable now to serve it.”

It was not only in his familiar letters, but also in private conversation, that he betrayed this excessive partiality for so undeserving a friend. He once declared, to a common friend, that “ Lord Bolingbroke knew more of Europe, than perhaps all Europe put together.”

Were there no other circumstances or considerations to vindicate Mr. POPE, the very extravagance of his attachment to Lord Bolingbroke, which bordered even upon imbecility \*, would be alone sufficient to convince any reasonable and impartial mind, that he could not, from any selfish considerations, be induced to violate his engagements to so respected and re-

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\* Nevertheless, Mr. POPE was not quite blind to the weak part of his Lordship’s capacity.—In a letter to Dean Swift, speaking of this favourite idol, he says—

“ Lord B—— is above trifling: When he writes of  
 “ any thing in this world, he is more than mortal; if  
 “ EVER HE TRIFLES, IT MUST BE WHEN HE TURNS DI-  
 “ VINE.”



vered a friend, though he afterwards proved so unworthy †. Having

† It would be unpardonable not to acquaint the reader, that at the time when this infamous charge first made its appearance, Mr. Warburton, the present Bishop of Gloucester, with the laudable zeal of a true friend, wrote a spirited vindication of Mr. POPE's conduct, which is to be found, with some few literal and verbal corrections, in the Appendix, No. 2\*.

This noble exertion of one of the best offices of friendship, drew a load of abuse on the writer. The truth is, that the indignant and undissimulating spirit which he shews in this little piece, as well as in his greater productions, has provoked the impotent rage, not only of those who have smarted under his lash, but of others who dreaded a scourge, which they were conscious of deserving. It is his Lordship's peculiar felicity, however, to have incurred all the scurrility with which he has been treated, by the two most glorious efforts, which could excite such resentment and rancour—the *vindication of his Friend*, and the *defence of Religion*.

But while wit and learning are honoured and renowned, while the generous warmth of friendship is held dear and valuable, while a pious zeal for religion, is revered among mankind, his Lordship's eminent worth and abilities, will place him among the most distinguished characters of the age.

\* It is observable, that another vindication was published at that time, under the title of a *Letter to the Lord Viscount Bolingbroke*; in a note of which, an anecdote is preserved, that, to such as did not know the editor of the *Patriot King*, may serve to expose his ridiculous vanity.

“ The editor being in company with the person to whom Mr. POPE had consigned the care of his works, and who, he thought, had some intention of writing Mr. POPE's Life, told him he had an anecdote, which he believed  
nobody



Having rescued our author's *moral* character from the only imputation that was ever thrown upon it (ridiculous as it was) it will perhaps be expected that some notice should be taken of his *Religion*. It may appear strange, that one of his strong sense and liberal mind, should persist in professing a religion, founded in the grossest error and absurdity, and supported by the most manifest fraud and tyranny.

But this seems rather to have been owing to the tenderness of his heart, than the weakness of his head.

When we consider how deeply those principles are imprinted, which we imbibe in our youth, and the reverence we entertain for the opinions of our parents, more especially when filial affection comes in aid of parental authority;

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nobody knew but himself. "I was sitting one day, said he, with Mr. POPE, in his last illness, who coming suddenly out of a reverie, which you know he frequently fell into at that time, and fixing his eyes stedfastly on me, Mr. M—, said he, I have had an odd kind of a vision: me—thought I saw my own head open, and *Apollo* come out of it; I then saw your head open, and *Apollo* went into it; after which our heads closed up again." The person to whom he addressed this idle discourse, could not help smiling at his vanity, and with sarcastic humour replied,—“Why, Sir, if I had an intention of writing *your* life, this might perhaps be a proper anecdote; but I do not see, that in Mr. *Pope's*, it will be of any consequence whatever.” Neither in truth would it have appeared now, did it not serve as a trait to characterize the pitiful instrument of so base an aspersion on the memory of such a worthy man and such an exalted genius as Mr. POPE.



when we reflect on the regard we pay to our earliest and most intimate friendships and connections, which we should forfeit by abandoning those principles, we shall find that it requires something more than a strong understanding, to make an open renunciation of opinions, which would be attended with the loss of all those heart-felt pleasures, which we derive from the love of our parents, and the esteem of our earliest friends.

These were, no doubt, among the obstacles which restrained Mr. POPE from publicly renouncing a religion, the bigotry of which he has more than once exposed and ridiculed in his writings.

He tells us himself, that he lived under penal laws, and many other disadvantages; not for want of honesty or conscience, but merely for having too weak a head, or too tender a heart.

As no one can suppose it owing to the former, candour must necessarily impute it to the latter: And that this was the true cause, is farther evident from the pious declaration he made on Lord Oxford's expressing his concern, that he should be incapable of taking a place. "Which," said our author, "I could not be capable of without giving a great deal of concern to my father and mother; such concern," he added emphatically, "as I would not give to either of them, for all the places he could have given me."

But



But the powerful effect of Mr. POPE's filial piety and affection, cannot be better exemplified than by the following authentic anecdote.

The Queen declared her intention of honouring him at Twickenham with a visit. His mother was then alive; and lest the visit should give her pain, on account of the danger his religious principles might incur by an intimacy with the court, his piety made him, with great duty and humility, beg that he might decline this honour †.

Several of his friends, however, as might well be expected, were anxious that he should abjure the profession of a religion, so inconsistent with his enlightened understanding, and so injurious to his interest.

Among others, Atterbury the Bishop of Rochester, strenuously exerted his endeavours for that purpose. He had often pressed him to this

† Some years after, his mother being then dead, the Prince of Wales condescended to do him the honour of a visit: When Mr. POPE met him at the water-side, he expressed the sense of the honour done him in very proper terms, joined with the most dutiful professions of attachment. On which the Prince said, "It is very well; but how shall we reconcile your love to a Prince, with your professed indisposition to Kings: Since Princes will be Kings in time?" Sir, replied POPE, I consider royalty under that noble and authorised type of the Lion; while he is young, and before his nails are grown, he may be approached, and caressed with safety and pleasure.



effect in private conversation, but Mr. POPE always declined or eluded the subject.

On the death of his father, however, the Bishop addressed him very seriously on this subject, in the following letter.

“ I have nothing to say to you on that melancholy subject, with an account of which the printed papers have furnished me, but what you have already said to yourself.

“ When you have paid the debt of tenderness you owe to the memory of a father, I doubt not but you will turn your thoughts towards improving that accident to your own ease and happiness. You have it now in your power to pursue that method of thinking and living which you like best.”

To this Mr. POPE wrote the following well-penned answer.

“ My Lord,

“ I am truly obliged by your kind condolence on my father’s death, and the desire you express that I shall improve this incident to my advantage. I know your Lordship’s friendship to me is so extensive, that you include in that wish, both my spiritual and my temporal advantage; and it is what I owe to that friendship, to open my mind unreservedly to you on this head. It is true, I have lost a  
“ parent,



“ parent, for whom no gains I could make  
 “ would be any equivalent. But that was not  
 “ my only tye: I thank God another still re-  
 “ mains (and long may it remain) of the same  
 “ tender nature: *Genitrix est mihi*---and excuse  
 “ me if I say with Euryalus,

“ *Nequeam lacrymas perferre parentis.*”

“ A rigid divine may call it a carnal tye, but  
 “ sure it is a virtuous one; at least, I am more  
 “ certain, that it is a duty of nature to preserve  
 “ a good parent’s life and happiness, than I am  
 “ of any speculative point whatsoever.

“ *Ignaram hujus quodcunque pericli*  
 “ *Hanc ego, nunc, linguam!*

“ For *she*, my Lord, *would think this separa-*  
 “ *tion more grievous than any other*; and I, for  
 “ my part, know as little as poor Euryalus did  
 “ of the success of such an adventure (for an  
 “ adventure it is, and no small one, in spite of  
 “ the most positive divinity.) Whether the  
 “ change would be to my spiritual advantage,  
 “ God only knows: this I know, that I mean  
 “ as well in the religion I now profess, as I can  
 “ possibly ever do in another. Can a man who  
 “ thinks so justify a change, even if he thought  
 “ both equally good? To such an one, the part  
 “ of joining with any one body of Christians  
 “ might perhaps be easy, but I think it would  
 “ not be so, to renounce the other.

“ Your



“ Your Lordship has formerly advised me to  
“ read the best controversies between the  
“ Churches. Shall I tell you a secret? I did so  
“ at fourteen years old, (for I loved reading, and  
“ my father had no other books) there was a  
“ collection of all that had been written on both  
“ sides in the reign of King James the Second:  
“ I warmed my head with them, and the conse-  
“ quence was, that I found myself a Papist and  
“ a Protestant by turns, according to the last  
“ book I read \*. I am afraid most seekers are in  
“ the same case, and when they stop, they are  
“ not so properly converted, as out-witted. You  
“ see how little glory you would gain by my  
“ conversion. And after all, I verily believe  
“ your Lordship and I are both of the same re-  
“ ligion, if we were thoroughly understood by  
“ one another; and that all honest and reason-  
“ able Christians would be so, if they did but  
“ talk enough together every day; and had no-  
“ thing to do together, but to serve God, and  
“ live in peace with their neighbour.

“ As to the temporal side of the question, I  
“ can have no dispute with you; it is certain,  
“ all the beneficial circumstances of life, and all  
“ the shining ones, lie on the part you would  
“ invite me to. But if I could bring myself to

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\* This is an admirable description of every reader busied in religious controversy, without possessing the *Principles* on which a right judgment of the points in question is to be regulated. See the note on this Letter, vol. 8, edit. 8vo. of POPE's Works, p. 87.



“ fancy, what I think you do but fancy, that  
 “ I have any talents for active life, I want health  
 “ for it; and besides it is a real truth, I have  
 “ less inclination (if possible) than ability.  
 “ Contemplative life is not only my scene, but  
 “ it is my habit too. I begun my life where  
 “ most people end theirs, with a dis-relish of all  
 “ that the world calls ambition: I do not know  
 “ why it is called so, for to me it always seemed  
 “ to be rather stooping than climbing. I’ll tell  
 “ you my politic and religious sentiments in a  
 “ few words. In my politics, I think no fur-  
 “ ther than how to preserve the peace of my  
 “ life, in any government under which I live;  
 “ nor in my religion, than to preserve the peace  
 “ of my conscience in any church with which I  
 “ communicate. I hope all churches and all  
 “ governments are so far of God, as they are  
 “ rightly understood, and rightly administered:  
 “ and where they are, or may be wrong, I leave  
 “ it to God alone to mend or reform them;  
 “ which whenever he does, it must be by greater  
 “ instruments than I am. I am not a Papist,  
 “ for I renounce the temporal invasions of the  
 “ papal power, and detest their arrogated autho-  
 “ rity over princes and states. I am a Catholic  
 “ in the strictest sense of the word. If I was  
 “ born under an absolute prince, I would be a  
 “ quiet subject; but I thank God I was not. I  
 “ have a due sense of the excellence of the  
 “ British constitution. In a word, the things  
 “ I have always wished to see, are not a  
 “ Roman Catholic, or a French Catholic, or a  
 “ Spanish Catholic, but a true Catholic: and  
 “ not



“ not a King of Whigs, or a King of Tories,  
 “ but a King of England. Which God of his  
 “ mercy grant his present Majesty may be,  
 “ and all future Majesties : You see, my Lord, I  
 “ end like a preacher : this is *sermo ad clerum*,  
 “ not *ad populum*. Believe me, with infinite  
 “ obligation and sincere thanks, ever your, &c.”

In this letter the discerning few will read a full confession of our author's faith. He was not a slave to bigotry or superstition. He was not, as he himself somewhere jocularly expresses it, an idol-worshipper, though a Papist. In short, from the many free and bold strokes which are to be found not only in his public writings, but in his private correspondences, against the grosser absurdities of the Romish religion, it is evident that he was not dupe to the tenets of it.

That he did not renounce this religion on the death of his mother, is, among other causes, to be imputed to his tender caution of not giving scandal to some of his intimates of that persuasion, whom he esteemed and loved.

His nice attention to avoid giving offence by a seeming neglect of religious decorum, was conspicuous in his latest moments.

When Mr. Hooke asked him whether he would not die as his father and mother had done, and whether he should send for a priest, he answered—“ I do not suppose it to be essen-  
 “ tial ;



“ tial; but,” he added, “ it will look right, and I  
 “ heartily thank you for putting me in mind  
 “ of it \*.”

These words alone, spoken on so solemn an occasion, are sufficient, without any other circumstances, to point out to those of any penetration, what has been intimated above, that our author's understanding was too solid and acute to be perverted by the fallacy and foppery of a religion, which can only impose upon the vulgar.

To the reasons before assigned, why Mr. POPE did not, on the death of his mother, publicly renounce the Romish religion, it may be added, that the contempt with which CONVERTS are too often treated, and the suspicion which is generally entertained of their sincerity, more especially when their conversion inclines to that side to which temporal interest gives a bias, were motives which must have very powerfully co-operated on one of our author's extreme delicacy and sensibility, which made him abhor the thought of being suspected to sacrifice his religious principles, from any motive of worldly honour or interest.

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\* Mr. Hooke, on this occasion, told the present Bishop of Gloucester, that the priest, whom he had provided to do the last office to the dying man, came out from him, penetrated to the last degree with the state of mind in which he found his penitent; resigned and wrapt up in the love of God and man.



Not many months before his death, in a serious and retired conversation with the present Bishop of Gloucester, speaking of persecution for religious opinions, he said he was convinced that the Church of Rome had all the marks of that anti-christian power, predicted of in the writings of the New Testament. On which his friend asking him why he would not publicly leave that corrupt church, which would be a great triumph to truth, and do public service to his country; he replied, he thought himself of too little consequence to do much good thereby, and he was very certain it would be exposing himself to much abuse.

Nevertheless, no man ever expressed a greater reverence and veneration of the Deity, or entertained a firmer persuasion of the truths of Christianity.

Witlings and Freethinkers are always forward to pervert the sentiments of eminent writers, so as to give countenance to their own ridiculous and licentious principles.

Whenever our author's writings were thus misapplied, it gave him unaffected concern; and he readily embraced the first occasion of entering his protest against all such misconstructions.

With this pious view, as has been intimated, he penned his *Universal Prayer*, on the idea of  
the



the Lord's Prayer, to obviate all suspicions of his inclining toward fate and naturalism, by shewing his firm belief of Revelation, his religious acquiescence in the supreme will, and his confidence full of hope and immortality.

He was wont to say, among his private friends, that "he was so certain of the soul's being immortal, that he seemed to feel it within him, as it were by intuition."

A day or two before his death, he was, as is common in the last stage of his disorder, at times, delirious. In one of these temporary absences of reason, or rather in one of its disorders, he rose by four in the morning, and a friend at that time with him and anxious for him, went and sought after him, and found him in his library very busy in writing. He persuaded him to desist, and took away the paper unperceived, to shew it to Mr. Warburton. But what does the reader conjecture was the subject of this great man's disordered thoughts? It was on the *Immortality of the Soul*: on a theory of his own just then, excogitated; in which he speaks of those material things which tend to strengthen and support the soul's immortality, and of those which weaken and destroy it. Visions suggested to him, from former reflexions on his own case. This is only mentioned to shew, that the same momentous ideas possessed his mind both in sickness and health, in the sane and insane state of his mind.



In short, he worshipped the Supreme Being with an ardent and pure devotion: he took all occasions to manifest his firm belief of Revelation, and, as the result of the whole, he steadily and uniformly practised all the essential duties of religion.

Our author, some months before his death, made his Will, the contents of which have already been made public: but as this solemn instrument seems, with the utmost propriety, to claim a place in the history of his life, a copy of it is here subjoined.

“ In the name of God, Amen. I Alexander  
 “ POPE of Twickenham, in the county of Mid-  
 “ dlesex, make this my last will and testament.  
 “ I resign my soul to its Creator in all humble  
 “ hope of its future happiness, as in the dis-  
 “ posal of a Being infinitely good. As to my  
 “ body, my will is, that it be buried near the  
 “ monument of my dear parents at Twicken-  
 “ ham, with the addition, after the words *filius*  
 “ *fecit*—of these only, *et sibi: Qui obiit anno*  
 “ *17 — ætatis —* and that it be carried to the  
 “ grave by six of the poorest men of the parish,  
 “ to each of whom I order a suit of grey coarse  
 “ cloth, as mourning. If I happen to die at  
 “ any inconvenient distance, let the same be  
 “ done in any other parish, and the inscription  
 “ be added on the monument at Twickenham.  
 “ I hereby make and appoint my particular  
 “ friends, Allen Lord Bathurst, Hugh Earl of  
 “ Marchmont, the Honourable William Mur-  
 “ ray,



“ ray, his Majesty’s solicitor general, and  
 “ George Arbuthnot, of the Court of Exche-  
 “ quer, Esq; the survivors or survivor of them,  
 “ executors of this my last will and testament.

“ But all the manuscript and unprinted pa-  
 “ pers, which I shall leave at my decease, I  
 “ desire may be delivered to my noble friend,  
 “ Henry St. John, Lord Bolingbroke, to whose  
 “ sole care and judgment I commit them, either  
 “ to be preserved or to be destroyed; or, in case  
 “ he shall not survive me, to the abovesaid Earl  
 “ of Marchmont. These, who in the course of  
 “ my life have done me all other good offices,  
 “ will not refuse me this last after my death: I  
 “ leave them therefore this trouble, as a mark  
 “ of my trust and friendship; only desiring  
 “ them each to accept of some small memorial  
 “ of me: That my Lord Bolingbroke will add  
 “ to his library all the volumes of my works  
 “ and translations of Homer, bound in red  
 “ Morocco, and the eleven volumes of those  
 “ of Erasmus: That my Lord Marchmont will  
 “ take the large paper edition of Thuanus, by  
 “ Buckley, and that portrait of Lord Boling-  
 “ broke, by Richardson, which he shall prefer:  
 “ That my Lord Bathurst will find a place for  
 “ the three statues of the Hercules of Farnese,  
 “ the Venus of Medicis, and the Apollo in  
 “ *chiaro oscuro*, done by Kneller: That Mr.  
 “ Murray will accept of the marble head of  
 “ Homer, by Bernini; and of Sir Isaac New-  
 “ ton, by Guelfi: and that Mr. Arbuthnot will

N n

“ take



“ take the Watch I commonly wore, which the  
 “ King of Sardinia gave to the late Earl of  
 “ Peterborough, and he to me on his death-  
 “ bed; together with one of the pictures of Lord  
 “ Bolingbroke.

“ Item, I desire Mr. Lyttelton to accept of  
 “ the busts of Spencer, Shakespear, Milton, and  
 “ Dryden, in marble, which his royal master  
 “ the Prince was pleased to give me. I give  
 “ and devise my library of printed books to  
 “ Ralph Allen of Widcombe, Esq; and to the  
 “ Reverend Mr. William Warburton, or to the  
 “ survivor of them (when those belonging to  
 “ Lord Bolingbroke are taken out, and when  
 “ Mrs. Martha Blount has chosen threescore out  
 “ of the number.) I also give and bequeath to  
 “ the said Mr. Warburton, the property of all  
 “ such of my works already printed, as he hath  
 “ written, or shall write commentaries or notes  
 “ upon, and which I have not otherwise disposed  
 “ of, or alienated; and all the profits which shall  
 “ arise after my death from such editions as he  
 “ shall publish without future alterations.

“ Item, In case Ralph Allen, Esq; abovesaid  
 “ shall survive me, I order my executors to pay  
 “ him the sum of one hundred and fifty pounds,  
 “ being, to the best of my calculation, the ac-  
 “ count of what I have received from him;  
 “ partly for my own, and partly for charitable  
 “ uses. If he refuse to take this himself, I de-  
 “ sire him to employ it in a way, I am per-



“suaded he will not dislike, to the benefit of  
“the Bath hospital\*.

“I give

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\* The reader cannot fail to be smitten with the apparent coolness which Mr. POPE, by this extraordinary bequest, betrays towards his truly amiable and generous friend Mr. Allen: and the impartiality of history will not allow me to conceal the cause.

Mr. POPE's extravagant attachment to Mrs. Blount is well known, and strongly displayed in this Will itself. About a year before Mr. POPE's death, this Lady, at the desire of Mr. POPE and Mr. Allen, paid a visit to the latter at Prior Park, where she behaved herself in so arrogant and unbecoming a manner, that it occasioned an irreconcilable breach between her and some part of Mr. Allen's family. As Mr. POPE's extreme friendship and affection for Mrs. Blount, made him consult her in all his concerns, so when he was about making his last will, he advised with her on the occasion; and she declared to him she would not accept the large provision made by it for herself, unless he returned back, by way of legacy, all that he had received of Mr. Allen, on any account: and Mr. POPE, with the greatest reluctance, complied with the infirmity of such a vindictive spirit.

Mr. Allen, on reading this clause, and observing the *sum* mentioned, smiled and said—“Poor Mr. POPE was always “a bad accomptant; however,” says he, “I *will receive* “the legacy (as Mrs. Blount is the residuary legatee) and “give it to the Bath hospital:” which he accordingly did. And to shew that his affection to Mr. POPE was still the same (laying all that was blameable in this affair to the charge of Mrs. Blount) he doubled the legacy Mr. POPE left to his faithful and favourite servant John Searl, and took him and his family into his protection.

One of Mr. POPE's intimate friends, who was obliged to him for all he had, being disappointed by his will, had the insolence to observe on this occasion, that “*the public said*



“ I give and devise to my sister-in-law, Mrs.  
 “ Magdalen Racket, the sum of three hundred  
 “ pounds ; and to her sons, Henry, and Robert  
 “ Racket, one hundred pounds each. I also  
 “ release and give to her all my right and interest  
 “ in and upon a bond of five hundred pounds,  
 “ due to me from her son Michael. I also give  
 “ her the family pictures of my father, mother,  
 “ and aunts, and the diamond ring my mother  
 “ wore, and her golden watch. I give to Eras-  
 “ mus Lewis, Gilbert West, Sir Clement Cotte-  
 “ rell, William Rollinson, Nathaniel Hook,  
 “ Esquires, and to Mrs. Anne Arbuthnot, to  
 “ each the sum of five pounds, to be laid out in  
 “ a ring, or any memorial of me ; and to my

(hiding his own rancour under a name which will bear every  
 thing) “ *that Mr. Pope had divided his fortune without any*  
 “ *other regard than to his fame and his mistress.*” So early  
 were these returns for the purest friendship paid to his me-  
 mory.

It is certain, however, that Mr. POPE in this, as in the  
 case of Lord Bolingbroke, deserved pity instead of blame.  
 For though he had the strongest friendship and affection for  
 Mrs. Blount, yet it was of a kind the most innocent and  
 pure, notwithstanding what malignant or mirthful people  
 might suggest to the contrary, either in jest or earnest. But  
 no excuse can be made for Mrs. Blount's abuse of the influ-  
 ence she had over him ; or for the indifference and neglect  
 she shewed to him throughout his whole last illness.

In short, it was his fortune, like Manley's in the PLAIN  
 DEALER, to be egregiously duped by his friend, and his mis-  
 tress. The mask of rigid, savage virtue, which the former  
 assumed when he turned philosopher, and the tenderness of  
 friendship which he thought he saw in the other, made a  
 sport of one of the best heads and hearts that ever was.

“ fer-



fervant, John Searl, who has faithfully and  
 “ ably served me many years, I give and devise  
 “ the sum of one hundred pounds, over and  
 “ above a year’s wages to himself and his wife ;  
 “ and to the poor of the parish of Twickenham,  
 “ twenty pounds, to be divided among them by  
 “ the said John Searl : And it is my will, if  
 “ the said John Searl die before me, that the said  
 “ sum of one hundred pounds go to his wife or  
 “ children.

“ Item, I give and devise to Mrs. Martha  
 “ Blount, younger daughter of Mrs. Martha  
 “ Blount, late of Welbeck-street, Cavendish-  
 “ square, the sum of one thousand pounds im-  
 “ mediately on my decease : and all the furni-  
 “ ture of my grotto, urns in my garden, house-  
 “ hold-goods, chattels, plate, or whatever is  
 “ not otherwise disposed of in this my will, I  
 “ give and devise to the said Mrs. Martha  
 “ Blount, out of a sincere regard, and long  
 “ friendship for her. And it is my will, that  
 “ my abovesaid Executors, the survivors or sur-  
 “ vivor of them, shall take an account of all my  
 “ estate, money or bonds, &c. and, after paying  
 “ my debts and legacies, shall place out all the  
 “ residue upon government, or other securities,  
 “ according to their best judgment ; and pay the  
 “ produce thereof, half-yearly, to the said Mrs.  
 “ Martha Blount, during her natural life : and  
 “ after her decease, I give the sum of one thousand  
 “ pounds to Mrs. Magdalen Racket, and her  
 “ sons, Robert, Henry, and John, to be divided  
 “ equally among them, or to the survivors or



“ survivor of them ; and after the decease of  
 “ the said Mrs. Martha Blount, I give the sum  
 “ of two hundred pounds to the abovesaid Gil-  
 “ bert West ; two hundred to Mr. George Ar-  
 “ buthnot ; two hundred to his sister, Mrs.  
 “ Anne Arbuthnot ; and one hundred to my  
 “ servant, John Searl ; to which soever of these  
 “ shall be then living : And all the residue and  
 “ remainder to be considered as undisposed of,  
 “ and go to my next of kin.

“ This is my last will and testament, written  
 “ with my own hand, and sealed with my seal,  
 “ this twelfth day of December, in the year of  
 “ our Lord, one thousand seven hundred and  
 “ forty-three.

“ ALEX. POPE.

“ Signed, sealed, and declared  
 “ by the Testator, as his last  
 “ will and testament, in  
 “ presence of us,

“ Radnor.

“ Stephen Hales, minister of Ted-  
 “ dington.

“ Joseph Spence, professor of his-  
 “ tory in the University of  
 “ Oxford.”



Soon after he had made his will, he wrote a letter to the learned commentator on his works, wherein is the following pathetic passage. “ I own,” says he, “ the late encroachments upon my constitution, make me willing to see the end of all farther care about me or my works. I would rest for the one, in a full resignation of my being to be disposed of by the Father of all mercy ; and for the other (though indeed a trifle, yet a trifle may be some example) I would commit them to the candour of a sensible and reflecting judge, rather than to the malice of every short-sighted and malevolent critic, or inadvertent and censorious reader : And no hand can set them in so good a light, or so well can turn their best side to the day, as your own.”

In the year 1751, was published a compleat edition of Mr. POPE's works. In what manner it was executed, and how far Mr. POPE has been justified in the choice he made both of a friend, and a critic, the approbation of the impartial public has long since determined.

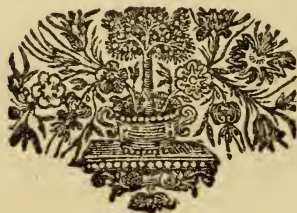
To that impartial tribunal, I submit the foregoing sheets, in which I have endeavoured to do justice to Mr. POPE's character, whether he is considered as an author, or as a man. If I have been mistaken in my judgment of his *literary* capacity, his writings are in every body's hands, and the reader's better taste will correct me. In the delineation of his *moral* character, I have been



more attentive to preserve a faithful likeness, than to draw a graceful picture.

The work, such as it is, will not, I trust, be altogether without its use: One of the most instructive gifts to posterity, being the Life of a Man of GENIUS and VIRTUE.

F I N I S.





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A P P E N D I X, N<sup>o</sup> I.

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L E T T E R S

FROM

Mr. P O P E,

TO

A A R O N H I L L, Esq;

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L E T T E R I.

*From Mr. POPE, to AARON HILL, Esq;*

SIR,

Jan. 26, 1730-31.

I AM obliged to you for your compliment, and can truly say, I never gave you just cause of complaint. You once mistook on a bookseller's idle report \*, and publicly expressed your mistake; yet you mistook a second time, that two initial letters, only †, were meant of you, though every letter in the alphabet was put in the same manner: and, in truth (except some few) those letters were set at random to occasion what they did occasion, the suspicion of bad and

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\* Of what was Mr. Pope's opinion of Mr. Hill's poem called the *Northern star*.

† The initial letters to the characters of the several kinds of genius in the *Profund*, in the 6th chap. of *the Art of sinking in Poetry*.  
jealous



jealous writers, of which number I could never reckon Mr. Hill, and most of whose names I did not know.

Upon this mistake you were too ready to attack me, in a paper of very pretty verses, in some public journal.—I should imagine the Dunciad meant you a real compliment, and so it has been thought by many, who have asked, to whom that passage made that oblique Panegyric? As to the notes, I am weary of telling a great truth, which is, that I am not author of them; though I love truth so well, as fairly to tell you, Sir, I think even that note a commendation, and should think myself not ill used *to have the same words said of me*\*: therefore, believe me, I never was other than friendly to you, in my own mind.

Have I not much more reason to complain of *the Caveat*? † Where give me leave, Sir, to tell you, with the same love of truth, and with the frankness it inspired (which, I hope, you will see, through this whole letter,) I am falsely abused, in being represented “*sneakingly to approve, and want the worth to cherish, or befriena men of merit.*” It is, indeed, Sir, a very great error: I am sorry the author of that reflection knew me no better, and happened to be unknown to those who could have better informed him: for I have the charity to think, he was misled only by his ignorance of me, and the benevolence to forgive the worst thing that ever (in my opinion) was said of me, on that supposition.

I do faithfully assure you, I never was angry at any criticism, made on my poetry, by whomsoever: if I could do Mr. Dennis any humane office, I would, though I were sure he would abuse me personally to-morrow; therefore it is no great merit in me, to find, at my heart, I am your servant. I am very sorry you ever was of another opinion.—I see, by many marks, you distinguished me from my contemporary writers: had we known one another, you had distinguished me from others, as a *man*, and no ill, or ill-natured one. I only wish you knew, as well as I do, how much I prefer qualities of the heart to those of the head: I vow to God, I never thought any great matters of my

\* That Mr. H. had published pieces in his youth, bordering upon the bombast. Mr. P. used to laugh at what he had done himself: of that sort, and would quote verses for the diversion of his friends, from an epic poem he wrote when a boy.

† A thing which Mr. H. says was his.



poetical capacity ; I only thought it a little better, comparatively, than that of some very mean writers, who are too proud.—But, I do know *certainly*, my moral life is *superior* to that of most of the *wits* of these days. This is a silly letter, but it will shew you my mind honestly, and, I hope, convince you, I can be, and am,

Sir,

*Your very affectionate  
and humble Servant,*

A. POPE.

## LETTER II.

*From Mr. POPE, to AARON HILL, Esq;*

*Parsons Green, Feb. 5, 1730-1.*

SINCE I am fully satisfied we are each of us sincerely and affectionately servants to the other, I desire we may be no further misled by the warmth of writing on this subject. If you think I have shewn too much *weakness*, or if I think you have shewn too much *warmth*, let us forgive one another's temper. I told you I thought my letter a silly one ; but the more I thought so, the more in sending it I shewed my trust in your good disposition toward me. I am sorry you took it to have an air of *neglect*, or *superiority*: because I know in my heart, I had not the least thought of being any way superior to Mr. Hill ; and, far from the least design to shew neglect to a gentleman who was shewing me civility, I meant in return to shew him a better thing, sincerity ; which I am sorry should be so ill expressed as to seem rudeness. I meant but to complain as frankly as you, that all complaints on both sides might be out, and at a period for ever : I meant by this to have laid a surer foundation for your opinion of me for the future, that it might no more be shaken by mistakes or whispers.

I am sure, Sir, you have a higher opinion of my poetry than I myself. But I am so desirous you should have a just one of me every way, that I wish you understood both my temper in general, and my justice to you in particular, better than I find my letter represented them. I wish it the more, since you tell me how ill a picture my enemies take upon



upon them to give, of the mind of a man they are utter strangers to. However, you will observe, that much *spleen* and *emotion* are a little inconsistent with *neglect*, and an opinion of *superiority*. Towards them, God knows, I never felt any emotions, but what bad writers raise in all men, those gentle ones of laughter or pity: that I was so open, concerned, and serious, with respect to you only, is sure a proof of regard, not neglect. For in truth, nothing ever vexed me, till I saw your epigram against Dr. Swift and me come out in your papers: and this, indeed, did vex me, to see *one swan among the geese*.

That the letters A. H. were applied to you in the papers, I did not know (for I seldom read them); I heard it only from Mr. S. as from yourself, and sent my assurances to the contrary. But I do not see how the annotator on the Dunciad could have rectified that mistake, *publicly*, without particularizing *your name*, in a book where I thought it too good to be inserted. No doubt he has applied that passage in the D. to you, by the story he tells; but his mention of *bombast*, only in some of your *juvenile pieces*, I think, was meant to shew, that passage hinted only at that *allegorical muddiness*, and not at any *worse sort of dirt*, with which some other writers were charged. I hate to say what will not be believed: yet when I told you, "Many asked me to *whom* " that oblique praise was meant?" I did not tell you I answered, it was *you*. Has it escaped your observation, that the name is a syllable too long? Or (if you will have it a christian name) is there any other in the whole book? Is there no author of two syllables whom it will better fit, not only as getting out of the allegorical muddiness, but as having been *dipt in the dirt of party-writing*, and recovering from it betimes? I know such a man, who would take it for a compliment, and so would his patrons too—But I ask you not to believe this, except you are vastly inclined to it. I will come closer to the point: would you have the note *left out*? It shall. Would you have it expressly said, *you were not meant*? It shall, if I have any influence on the editors.

I believe the note was meant only as a gentle rebuke, and friendly: I understood very well the *caveat* on your part to be the same; and complained (you see) of nothing but two or three lines reflecting on my *behaviour and temper to other writers*; because I knew they were not true, and you could not know they were.

You



You cannot in your cool judgment think it fair to fix a man's character on a point, of which you do not give one instance? Name but the man, or men, to whom I have unjustly omitted approbation or encouragement, and I will be ready to do them justice. I think I have *publicly* praised all the best writers of my time, except yourself, and such as I have had no fair opportunity to praise. As to the *great* and *popular*, I have praised but few, and those at the times when they were *least popular*. Many of those writers have done nothing else but flattered the Great and Popular, or been worse employed by them in party-stuff. I do indeed think it *no great pride* in me, to speak about *them* with some air of superiority; and this, Sir, must be the cause (and no other) that made me address *that declaration* of my temper towards *them*, to *you*, who had accused me of the contrary; not, I assure you, from the least imagination of any resemblance between you and them, either in merit or circumstances.

I named Mr. Dennis, because you distinguish him from the rest: so do I. But, moreover, he was uppermost in my thoughts, from having endeavoured (*before* your admonition) to promote his affair, with Lord Wilmington, Lord Lansdown, Lord Blandford, and Mr. Pulteney, &c. who promised me to favour it. But it would be unjust to measure my good-will by the effects of it on the Great, many of whom are the last men in the world who will pay tributes of this sort, from their own un-giving nature; and many of whom laugh at me when I seriously petition for Mr. Dennis. After this, I must not name the many whom I have fruitlessly solicited: I hope yet to be more successful. But, Sir, you seem too iniquitous in your conceptions of me, when you fancy I called such things *services*. I called them but *humane offices*: services I said I *would* render him, *if I could*. I *would* ask a place for life for him; and I *have*; but that is not in my power: if it was, it would be a *service*, and I wish it.

I mentioned the *possibility* of Mr. D.'s abusing me for forgiving him, because he actually did, in print, lately represent my poor, undesigning, subscriptions to him, to be the effect of fear and desire to stop his critiques upon me. I wish Mr. Hill would (for once) think so candidly of me, as to believe me sincere in one declaration, that "I desire no  
 " man to belye his own judgment in my favour." There-  
 fore,



fore, though I acknowledge your generous offer \* to give *examples of imperfections* rather out of your own works than mine, in your intended book; I consent, with all my heart, to your confining them to *mine*; for two reasons: the one, that I fear your sensibility that way is greater than my own (by observing you seem too concerned at that hint given by the notes on the Dunciad of a little fault in the works of your *youth* only): the other is a better, namely, that I intend to amend by your remarks, and correct the faults you find, if they are such as I expect from Mr. Hill's cool judgment.

I am very sensible, that my *poetical* talent is all that may (I say not, will) make me *remembered*: but it is my *morality* only that must make me *beloved*, or *happy*: and if it be any deviation from *greatness of mind*, to prefer friendships to fame, or the honest enjoyments of life to noisy praises; I fairly confess that meanness. Therefore, it is, Sir, that I much more resent any attempt against my moral character (which I know to be unjust) than any to lessen my poetical one, (which, for all I know, may be very just.)

Pray then, Sir, excuse my weak letter, as I do your warm one. I end as I begun. You guessed right, that I was sick when I wrote it: Yours are very well written, but I have neither health nor time to make mine so. I have writ a whole book of retractations of my writings (which would greatly improve your criticisms on my errors) but of my life and manners I do not yet repent one jot, especially when I find in my heart I continue to be, without the least acrimony (even as little as I desire you should bear to myself) sincerely, Sir,

*Yours affectionately.*

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\* Mr. H. had told him that he had almost finished *An Essay on propriety and impropriety in design, thought and expression, illustrated by examples in both kinds, from the writings of Mr. Pope*; which, if it would create the least pain in Mr. POPE, he was willing with all his heart to have it run thus, *An Essay on propriety and impropriety, &c. illustrated by examples of the first from the writings of Mr. Pope, and of the last from those of the author.*



## LETTER III.

From Mr. POPE, to AARON HILL, Esq;

Sept. 1, 1731.

I COULD not persuade myself to write to you since your great loss, till I hoped you had received some alleviation to it, from the only hand which can give any, that of Time. Not to have mentioned it, however fashionable it may be, I think unnatural, and in some sense inhuman; and I fear the contrary custom is too much an excuse, in reality, for that indifference we too usually have for the concern of another: in truth, that was not my case: I know the reason of one man is of little effect toward the resignation of another; and when I compared the forces of yours and mine, I doubted not which had the advantage, even though in your own concern. 'Tis hard, that in these tender afflictions the greatness of the mind and the goodness are opposite to each other; and that while reason, and the consideration upon what conditions we receive all the goods of this life, operate towards our quiet; even the best of our passions (which are the same things with the softest of our virtues) refuse us that comfort. But I will say no more on this melancholy subject. The whole intent of this letter is to tell you how much I wish you capable of consolation, and how much I wish to know when you find yourself so. I would hope you begin to seek it, to amuse your mind with those studies of which Tully says, *Adversis perfugium & solatium præbent*, and to transcribe (if I may so express it) your own softnesses and generous passions into the hearts of others who more want them. I do not flatter you in saying, I think your tragedy will do this effectually (to which I had occasion, the other day, to do justice to Mr. Wilks) or whatever else you chuse to divert your own passion with, and to raise that of your readers.—I wish the change of place, or the views of nature in the country, made a part of your scheme.—You once thought of Richmond—I wish you were there, or nearer. I have thrice missed of you in town, the only times I have been there: my last month was passed at my Lord Cobham's, and in a journey through Oxfordshire: I wish you as susceptible, at this time, of these pleasures as I am. I have been truly concerned for you, and for your daughter,



daughter, who I believe is a *true part* of you. I will trouble you no farther, but with the assurance that I am not unmindfully,  
 Sir, *Yours, &c.*

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## LETTER IV.

*From Mr. POPE, to AARON HILL, Esq;*

Sept. 3, 1731.

**I** HAVE been, and yet am, totally confined by my mother's relapse, if that can be called so, which is rather a constant and regular decay. She is now on her last bed, in all probability, from whence she has not risen in some weeks, yet in no direct pain, but a perpetual languor. I suffer for her, for myself, and for you, in the reflection of what you have felt at the side of a sick bed which I now feel, and of what I probably soon shall suffer which you now suffer, in the loss of one's best friend. I have wished (ever since I saw your letter) to ask you, since you find your own house a scene of sorrows, to pass some days in mine; which I begin to think I shall soon have the same melancholy reason to shun. In the mean time, I make a sort of amusement of this melancholy situation itself, and try to derive a comfort in imagining I give some to her. I am seldom prompted to poetry in these circumstances; yet I will send you a few lines I sent t'other day from her bed-side to a particular friend. Indeed I want spirits and matter, to send you any thing else, or on any other subject. These too are spiritless, and incorrect.

While ev'ry joy, successful youth! is thine,  
 Be no unpleasing melancholy mine.  
 Me long, ah long! may these soft cares engage;  
 To rock the cradle of reposing age,  
 With lenient arts prolong a parent's breath,  
 Make languor smile, and smooth the bed of death.  
 Me, when the cares my better years have shown  
 Another's age, shall hasten on my own;  
 Shall some kind hand, like B \* \* \* 's or thine,  
 Lead gently down, and favour the decline?  
 In wants, in sickness, shall a *Friend* be nigh,  
 Explore my *thought*, and watch my asking eye?

Whether



Whether that blessing be deny'd, or giv'n,  
Thus far, is right; the rest belongs to heav'n.

Excuse this, in a man who is weak and wounded, but not by his enemies, but for his friends. I wish you the continuance of all that is yet dear to you in life, and am truly,  
&c.

## L E T T E R V.

*From Mr. POPE, to AARON HILL, Esq;*

*Twickenham, Dec. 22, 1731.*

**I** Thank you for your tragedy, which I have now read over a sixth time, and of which I not only preserve, but increase, my esteem. You have been kind to this age, in not telling the next, in your preface, the ill taste of the town, of which the reception you describe it to have given of your play (worse, indeed, than I had heard, or could have imagined) is a more flagrant instance than any of those trifles mentioned in my epistle; which yet, I hear, the forevanity of our pretenders to taste flinches at extremely.—The title you mention had been a properer to that epistle—I have heard no criticisms about it, nor do I listen after them; *Nos hæc novimus esse nihil* (I mean, I think the verses to be so): but as you are a man of tender sentiments of honour, I know it will grieve you to hear another undeservedly charged with a crime his heart is free from: for if there be truth in the world, I declare to you, I never imagined the least application of what I said of Timon could be made to the D. of Ch—s, than whom there is scarce a more blameless, worthy and generous, beneficent character, among all our nobility: and if I have not lost my senses, the town has lost them, by what I heard so late, as but two days ago, of the uproar on this head. I am certain, if you calmly read every particular of that description, you'll find almost all of them point-blank the reverse of that person's Villa. It is an aukward thing for a man to print, in defence of his own work, against a chimæra: you know not who, or what, you fight against: the objections start up in a new shape, like the armies and phantoms of magicians, and no weapon can cut a mist, or a shadow. *Yet it would have been*



a pleasure to me, to have found some friend saying a word in my justification, against a most malicious falshood. I speak of such, as have known by their own experience, these twenty years, that I always took up their defence, when any stream of calumny ran upon them. If it gives the duke one moment's uneasiness, I should think myself ill paid, if the whole earth admired the poetry; and believe me, would rather never have written a verse in my life, than that any one of them should trouble a truly good man. It was once my case before, but happily reconciled; and among generous minds nothing so endears friends, as the having offended one another.

I lament the malice of the age, that studies to see its own likeness in every thing; I lament the dulness of it, that cannot see an excellence: the first is my unhappiness, the second yours. I look upon the fate of your piece, like that of a great treasure, which is buried as soon as brought to light; but it is sure to be dug up the next age, and enrich posterity.

I have been very sensible, on these two occasions, to feel them (as I have done) at a time, when I daily feared the loss of (what is, and ought to be dearer to me than any reputation, *but that of a friend*, or than any thing of my own, *except my morals*) the loss of a most tender parent—She is alive, and that is all! I have perceived my heart in this, and you may believe me sincerely, &c.

## LETTER VI.

From Mr. POPE, to AARON HILL, Esq;

I MADE a strong essay to have told you in person how very kindly I took your two last letters. The only hours I had in my power from a necessary care that brought me back immediately, I would have imposed on you. It will please you to know the poor woman \* is rather better, though it may be but like the improvement of a light on the end of a dying taper, which brightens a little before it expires.—Your hint about my title of *false taste*, you will see, is made use of in the second edition. Your opinion also of

\* His Mother.



my giving some public dissent or protest against the silly malicious misconstruction of the town, I agree to; but I think no one step should be taken in it, but *in concert* with the Duke whom they injure. It will be a pleasure felt by you, to tell you, his Grace has written to me the strongest assurance imaginable of the rectitude of his opinion, and of his resentment of that report, which to *him* is an *impertinence*, to *me* a *villainy*.

I am afraid of tiring you, and (what is your best security) I have not time to do it. I'll only just tell you, that many circumstances you have heard, as resemblances to the picture of Timon, are utterly inventions of lyars; the number of servants never was an hundred, the paintings not of Verrio or La Guerre, but Bellucci and Zaman; no such buffet, manner of reception at the study, terras, &c. all which, and many more, they have not scrupled to forge, to gain some credit to the application: and (which is worse) belied testimonies of noblemen, and of my particular friends, to condemn me. In a word, the malice is as great as the dulness, of my calumniators: the one I forgive, the other I pity, and I despise both. Adieu; the first day I am near you, I will find you out, and shew you something you will like. My best good wishes are yours, and Miss Urania's.

## LETTER VII.

*From Mr. POPE, to AARON HILL, Esq;*

June 2, 1738.

I SENT you as honest an answer as I could, to the letter you favoured me with; and am sorry you imagine any *civil reproach*, or *latent meaning*, where I meant to express myself with the utmost openness. I would assure you, if you please, by my oath, as well as my word, that I am in no degree displeased at any freedom you can take with me in a private letter, or with my writings in public. I again insist, that you alter or soften no one criticism of yours in my favour; nor deprive yourself of the liberty, nor the world of the profit, of your freest remarks on my errors.

In what I said, I gave you a true picture of my own heart, as far as I know it myself. It is true, I have shewn a *scorn* of some writers; but it proceeded from an experience



that they were bad men, or bad friends, or vile hirelings; in which case, their being authors did not make them, to me, either more respectable, or more formidable. As for any other pique, my mind is not so susceptible of it as you have seemed, on each occasion, too much inclined (I think) to believe. What may have sometimes seemed a *neglect* of others, was rather a *laziness* to cultivate or contract new friends, when I was satisfied with those I had; or when I apprehended their demands were too high for me to answer.

I thank you for the confidence you shew you have in me, in telling me what you judge amiss in my *nature*. If it be (as you too partially say) my only fault, I might soon be a perfect character: for I would endeavour to correct this fault in myself, and intreat you to correct all those in my writings; I see, by the specimen you generously gave me in your late letter, you are able to do it; and I would rather owe (and *own* I owe) that correction to your friendship, than to my own industry.

For the last paragraph of yours, I shall be extremely ready to convey what you promise to send me, to my Lord B. I am in hopes very speedily to see him myself, and will, in that case, be the bearer; if not, I shall send it, by the first safe hand, to him. I am truly glad of any occasion of proving myself, with all the respect that is consistent with sincerity, Your, &c.

## LETTER VIII.

*From Mr. POPE, to AARON HILL, Esq;*

June 9, 1738.

THE favour of yours of May the 11th, had not been unacknowledged so long, but it reached me not till my return from a journey, which had carried me from scene to scene, *where Gods might wander with delight*. I am sorry yours was attended with any thoughts less pleasing, either from the conduct towards you of the world in general, or of any one else, in particular. As to the subject-matter of the letter, I found what I have often done in receiving letters from those I most esteemed, and most wished to be esteemed by; a great pleasure in reading it, and a great inability to answer it. I can only say, you oblige me, in seeming so well to know.



I know me again ; as one extremely willing that the free exercise of criticism should extend over my own writings, as well as those of others, whenever the public may receive the least benefit from it ; as I question not they will a great deal, when exerted by you. I am sensible of the honour you do me, in proposing to send me your work before it appears : if you do, I must insist, that no use in my favour be made of that distinction, by the alteration or softening of any censure of yours on any line of mine.

What you have observed in your letter I think just ; only I would acquit myself in one point : I could not have the least *pique* to Mr. Th. in what is cited in the treatise of the *Bathos* from the play which I never supposed to be his : he gave it as Shakespear's, and I take it to be of that age : and indeed the collection of those, and many more of the thoughts censured there, was not made by me, but Dr. Arbuthnot.—I have had two or three occasions to lament, that you seem to know me much better as a *poet*, than as a *man*. You can hardly conceive how little either pique or contempt I bear to any creature, unless for immoral or dirty actions : any mortal is at full liberty, unanswered, to write and print of me as a poet, to praise me one year, and blame me another ; only I desire him to spare my character as an honest man, over which he can have no private, much less any public, right, without some personal knowledge of my heart, or the motives of my conduct : nor is it a sufficient excuse, to alledge he was *so* or *so* informed, which was the case with those men.

I am sincere in all I say to you, and have no vanity in saying it. You really over-value me greatly in my poetical capacity ; and I am sure your work would do me infinitely too much honour, even if it blamed me oftener than it commended : for the first you will do with lenity, the last with excess. But I could be glad to part with some share of any good man's admiration, for some of his affection, and his belief that I am not wholly undeserving to be thought, what I am to you.







A P P E N D I X, No. II.

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A  
L E T T E R  
TO THE  
EDITOR of the LETTERS

O N  
The Spirit of PATRIOTISM,  
The Idea of a PATRIOT-KING,  
A N D  
The State of Parties, &c.

Occasioned by the  
EDITOR'S ADVERTISEMENT.

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*Is this my Guide, Phylosopher and Friend?*

POPE to L. B.

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Printed in the Year MDCCXLIX,







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TO THE  
E D I T O R  
O F T H E  
L E T T E R S, &c.

SIR,

I Address this to you, as to a person different from the *Author* of these *Letters*. My respect for L. B's character will not suffer me to think you the same. Your *Advertisement* is the crudest and most unmanaged attack on the honour of his deceased friend; and he certainly was under all the ties of that sacred relation, to defend and protect it.

Your charge, against Mr. POPE, runs in these words,  
 —“ The original draughts [*of these letters*] were intrusted to  
 “ a man, on whom the author thought he might entirely  
 “ depend, after he had exacted from him, and taken his  
 “ promise, that they should never go into any hands, ex-  
 “ cept those of five or six persons who were then named to  
 “ him. In this confidence, the author rested securely for  
 “ some years; and though he was not without suspicion  
 “ that they had been communicated to more persons than  
 “ he intended they should be, yet he was kept, by repeated  
 “ assurances, even from suspecting that any copies had gone  
 “ into hands unknown to him. But this man was no sooner  
 “ dead, than he received information that an entire edition  
 “ of 1500 copies of these papers had been printed; that  
 “ this very man had corrected the press, and that he had  
 “ left them in the hands of the Printer, to keep with great  
 “ secrecy



“ secrecy till further orders. The honest printer kept his  
 “ word with him better than he kept his with his friend :  
 “ so that the whole edition came, at last, into the hands of  
 “ the author, except some few copies, which this person  
 “ had taken out of the heap, and carried away. These are  
 “ doubtless the copies which have been handed about, not  
 “ very privately, since his death. The rest were all de-  
 “ stroyed in one common fire.—By these copies it ap-  
 “ peared, that the man who had been guilty of this breach  
 “ of trust, had taken upon him further to divide the subject,  
 “ and to alter and omit passages according to the suggestions  
 “ of his own fancy. What aggravates this preceeding ex-  
 “ tremely is, that the author had hold him, on several oc-  
 “ casions, amongst other reasons, why he could not con-  
 “ sent to the publication of these papers, that they had been  
 “ written in too much heat and hurry for the public eye.—  
 “ He chanced to know that scraps and fragments of these  
 “ papers had been employed to swell a monthly magazine,  
 “ and that the same honourable employment of them was  
 “ to be continued—The Editor, therefore, who has in  
 “ his hands the genuine copy—resolved to publish it.”

This is the charge. And with regard to the fact, that  
 Mr. P. *did print an entire edition of Lord B's letters without his*  
*consent*, it must, as far as I can see, be left uncontroverted.  
 For the *man* accused is *dead*. He cannot speak for himself;  
 and his papers, which might have spoken for him, were all  
 devised by the dying *man*, to the trust and absolute disposal  
 of his *noble friend*.

My complaint (and I persuade myself all impartial men  
 will join in it) is, that the charge is enforced with so un-  
 friendly, nay so vindictive a severity, that the public is even  
 invited to think the worst of the accused's *intention*: there  
 being nothing so base, or so mean, which the terms of the  
 accusation will not justify them to infer from it.

Since, therefore, you have so far forgot the office of a  
 fair accuser, as not only to avoid assisting the judgment of  
 the tribunal, you appeal to, in the *nature* of the FACT; but  
 to prefer your accusation in such terms as must necessarily  
 mislead it, let me be allowed to remind the public of what  
 you have so disingenuously omitted or disguised. Which I  
 shall do no otherwise, than by considering all the possible  
 motives Mr. P. could have for this action, supposing it to  
 have been committed in the manner charged upon him. For  
 though the *motive* cannot so alter the nature of actions, as



to make that right, which is, in itself, wrong; yet it may alleviate the weight of the very worst; it may make those pardonable, which are confessedly bad; and give even a splendour to the obliquities of others which a truly generous mind would honour. Whether the fact in question, admitting it to be faulty, be not of this last class, must be submitted to the tribunal to which we now make our joint appeal.

In an offence of this kind, committed by *authors* against one another, the motive, that most readily occurs, is *plagiarism*: so that one might suspect this *breach of trust* was accompanied with an intended violation of property; and that the offender proposed assuming to himself the glory of his friend's performance; especially as he took the liberties here complained of, *to divide the subject, and to alter and omit passages according to the suggestions of his own fancy*. But if, in criminal proceedings, it be held a satisfactory answer to the charge of a paultry theft, that the accused was immensely rich, we shall need no other plea to acquit Mr. P. of this suspicion. Besides, the author of the *letters* was well known to all L. B's friends; the title-page of this surreptitious edition tells us, they were written by a *person of quality*; and the honest Printer himself knew the true author, as appears by his applying to L. B. with information of the 1500 copies.

As to any *lucrative* views; if Mr. P's beneficent temper, his generous contempt of money, which made him at several periods of his life refuse an honourable pension from ministers of more than one denomination, and decline every other way of establishing his fortune than by a noble appeal to the public taste: if this, I say, will not acquit him of so mean a suspicion, I might appeal to the very *circumstances* of the fact itself. He prints, at a considerable expence, 1500 copies of an eighteen-penny pamphlet to lye in the Printer's warehouse; and which, according to your own account, did actually lye there till his death. And what book? one, which of all the author's writings, was least calculated to catch the public attention, (however this extraordinary *advertisement* may now raise their curiosity) as the subject of it had been so often hacknied over, in the papers of the CRAFTSMAN. Had profit been his point, who can doubt but he had rather chosen some of L. B's HISTORICAL tracts, which he had equally in his possession.



Least of all will it be suspected to have been done to injure L. B. in his fame or fortune; the book itself being manifestly calculated to support both, by putting him in that light wherein he most affects to be seen, *a dispassionate and disinterested lover of his country*. Had Mr. P. designed to hurt his ease or reputation, he would probably have enriched us with his PHILOSOPHICAL or THEOLOGICAL works, where his noble friend gives less quarter to religious prejudices, than, here, to political corruptions; and which, by their being kept unpublished, deprive religion of one considerable advantage.

In a word, had Mr. P. been conscious to himself of any low, oblique, or unfriendly motive, how happened it that, at his death, he chose it should come to the knowledge of his friend? That he did *choose* it, is most certain. *His honest Printer*, you tell us, *faithfully kept his word with him*. His last illness was long and tedious, and known by him, as well as by his physicians, to be fatal. He might therefore have burnt these 1500 copies with a secrecy equal to the ostentation with which they *were all destroyed in one common fire* by this DEPOSITORY of the writings and reputation of a man, whose last vows to heaven were for the prosperity of his surviving FRIEND.

But, if we allow the fact, some reason, after all, must be given for his committing it. We have shewn the high absurdity of supposing it to be done on any of the motives already mentioned: which, indeed, only envy and malignity could suggest. One, only, remains: and happily, that one is what every man, at first sight, must acknowledge to be the true; *An excessive and superstitious zeal for L. B's glory*. He paid, as all the world knows, a kind of idolatrous homage to the *divine Attributes* of his friend. And should this be thought a folly by sober admirers, (a strange one it must appear to L. B. himself) yet, sure his L—p, though the last in justice, should be the first in pity, to forgive it.

He was not only the warmest advocate for his L—p's *private* and *public* virtues against his adversaries, but even against himself. It was his common subject of complaint, amongst his other friends, that L. B. was faultily negligent of his glory, even though the good of his country, and the happiness of the world depended on its being seen in its full splendour. That, although he seemed to be sent down hither by providence, from some higher sphere, to be the conservator of the *rights* and the *reason* of mankind, yet he suffered his  
actions



actions to be misrepresented, and his character to be blackened, when only shining out, and shewing himself as he was, would be fully sufficient to dispell all those dark mists of ignorance and envy. And this being of so important concern, was the reason, I suppose, why his friend chose to prevent the loss of these *letters*: This too, well accounts for his tempering the extreme brightness of them, so offensive to mere mortals, with that terrestrial mixture of his own. The very circumstance, which you, Sir, well express, where you say, *he had taken upon him, further to divide the subject, and to alter and omit passages, according to the suggestions of his own fancy*. And who knows but he might think himself something more than a *Porte-feuille* of his friend's papers, for he frequently told his acquaintance, (to whom I appeal on this occasion) that L. B. would, at his death, leave his writings to his disposal. A mutual confidence! which they placed in one another. But the execution of it on Mr. P's part, at the same time that it makes the story probable, prevents our having any written evidence of it. But concerning the particulars of those changes and interpolations, as the matter appears by the difference between the two editions, I shall say no more at present.

Having seen Mr. P's motive for *printing*, the reader may be curious to know when he thought of *publishing*. It could not be till he had the author's leave: that, the long detention of the pamphlet in the Printer's warehouse sufficiently evinces. It could not be in expectation of the author's death: that, the great disparity in the chance of survivorship will not allow us to suppose. Besides, (and let this, as it is sufficient, decide the matter) To what purpose was the expence of printing, and the hazard of secreting an edition projected *now*, when he would have had it equally in his power, if that event happened, to do it then? We have nothing left, even on your own state of the case, but to believe that he expected (as he used to tell his friends) very speedily to obtain L. B's concurrence. What grounds he had for such expectation, the *prudent* disposition of his MS. papers will not permit us to say.

The too eager pursuit then of his friend's glory being his only motive for this presumptuous liberty (a truth so evident, that I am persuaded Mr. P. has not a single friend or acquaintance remaining who does not as firmly believe it as that L. B. wrote the *letters*, and that Mr. P. committed them

to



to the press) since this, I say, is the case, his L—p's known *virtue* will never suffer me to suppose that you, Sir, and the author of these *letters* can be the same person. His known *wisdom* would less endure such an imputation. Whatever you, Sir, may think, his L—p's glory will never stand brighter with posterity than in the lines of this immortal poet. So that to defile the mirror, which holds his L—p up, by a kind of *magic* virtue, to the admiration of all times and places, would indeed shew him more *detached from the world, and indifferent to censure*, than even you, his apologist, think fit to represent him. It must surely be some *strong necessity* that could induce his Lordship to be thus necessary to his own undoing, that is, undoing the charm which his poetical friend had worked so high. And yet your *advertisement* supplies neither him nor your reader with any excuse of this nature. You thought fit, I will suppose, that some reason should be given for your publication of the *letters*. But had not your Bookseller done this for you already, when he so often told the public, that it was *to prevent their being imposed on by a spurious and mangled edition, of which one or two scraps had appeared in a MAGAZINE*? Possibly you will say, the reader might expect to know how they came there. If it was really your intention to satisfy him at any one's expence besides Mr. P.'s, why did you not seek out and detect the man engaged in that *honourable employment*, as by a proper irony you call it? Sure it was no difficult matter: for you tell us, again, that some of the copies *had been handed about not very privately* since Mr. P.'s death. Besides, the law would have obliged the proprietor of the *Magazine* to discover from whom he had received his stoln-goods. Why then so much tenderness for him, who manifested his design by *publishing*, and so little for him, who only gave suspicion of it, by *printing*? Or did the ORDER OF THINGS, which, indeed, (in Mr. P.'s language of his L——p) was here violated, require, that vengeance should pursue, and trace up the crime, to the original offender; who had so audaciously stretched his hand to the forbidden tree, and gathered, without leave, of the knowledge of political good and evil. Or if the severity of justice required even this; was it not enough to say, that the mischief came first from Mr. P. by his giving abroad too many copies; without telling their COMMON ENEMIES, that he had printed *fifteen hundred*? For it came not from these



these 1500, (which, you own, *were all destroyed in one common fire*) but from a straggling copy which escaped that destruction. As this brand therefore on Mr. POPE's memory was needless, it could not come from the hand of his *noble friend*.

But whatever high notions I myself may have of L. B. I am not so vain to think my readers must needs subscribe to them. They may, for ought I know, believe you and him to be one and the same. And then, I am half afraid, even his character, great as it is, will not secure him from their censure. Are the laws of friendship then so weak, may some of them be apt to say, are its bonds so slight, that *one* imprudent action committed against the *humour* of a friend, in a mistaken fondness for his glory which came near to adoration, that *one* such shall obliterate the whole merit of a life of service, flowing from the warmest heart that the passion of friendship ever took possession of? Obliterate, will they say, nay pursue, with inexorable vengeance, the poor delinquent to the foot of the most merciless tribunal; *that* PUBLIC, *one* part of which he had much offended by a vigorous war upon the general profligacy of manners; *another*, much more offended by the insufferable splendor of his talents; and a third, and that no small nor inconsiderable part, by his over zealous attachment to his very ACCUSER. Unhappy Poet! will they say, who has received the only wound to his honour from the hand of that friend, whose reputation he had, for many years, singly supported against an almost universal prejudice. But more unhappy ill-starred FRIENDSHIP, if these be thy iniquitous conditions! Who after this shall seek, in thee, a solace for the cares of private life; or believe thee to be, what thy Partisans have so often boasted in thy favour, the purest and largest source of *public virtue*? Never, after this, wilt thou be thought deserving of honest or better followers than MODERN PATRIOTS. For where true love of our country is, there, friendship wears a different face. At such time it has been known, that when real and repeated injuries had torn in sunder a well united friendship, the *death* of one of the parties has buried every past resentment, and revived, in the bosom of the other, all his ancient tenderness: as if the refined and defecated passions of him, who had shaken off mortality, had, by that divine sympathy of affections which lives between friends, communicated of its virtue to the



survivor. Nay I have heard, some where or other, of a MAN \*, who, when his dying friend, at the instigation, and to quiet the impotent passions, of another ; (for what generous mind has not been deceived by ill-placed friendships ?) had inserted an unkind clause concerning him in his last will, took no other revenge for a folly so unprovoked, than by doubling the legacy which his deceased friend had left to an old faithful servant, because he the survivor deemed it to be too little.

But the greatest have their weaknesses. A French author, I have some time read, who has given us a history of the *Hermetick philosophy*, brings almost every great name into the number of his Alchemists. He gives them all their due, but concludes every various eulogium alike——“ now “ his folly was in hoping to *extract gold from baser metals*.” And may we not, after all the good that may be said of our illustrious poet, (and there are few of whom so much can be *justly* said) lament, that the folly which ran through his whole life was, in trying to *extract friendship out of politics* ?

However, Sir, let the world talk as it may: I must still persist in thinking, that that noble person had no hand in your *Advertisement*. On this firm assurance, it will be said, perhaps, I might have left it to its own fortune, as not at all likely to mislead posterity ; while it represents Mr. P. as mean, low, interested and perfidious, whose nature, if I were to define it, should be done by the single word FRIENDSHIP ; so pure and so warm was the ray of that sacred passion which animated, and governed all his faculties. But when I consider how light a matter very often subjects the best established characters to the suspicions of posterity, posterity, often as malignant to virtue, as the age that saw it in its insufferable glory ; and how ready such posterity is to catch at a low revived slander, which the times that brought it forth saw despised and forgotten in its birth, I cannot but think it deserving a remark. These *letters*, Sir, of your publishing, afford us an indignant instance. The chastity of the *first* Scipio Africanus, in the case of the Spanish captive, was as celebrated, and as notorious as Mr. P's friendship for L. B. But one Valerius Antias (for calumny and history, the Oldmixon of Rome) made no scruple to assert, that far from restoring the fair Spaniard to her fa-

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\* Mr. Allen.



mily, he debauched and kept her. One would have hoped so mean a slander might have slept forgotten in the dirty corner of a poor pedant's \* common-place. And yet we see it quoted as a fact †, by an instructor of Kings. Who knows, but that at some happy time or other, when a writer wants to prove, that real friendship becomes a great man as little as real chastity ‡, this *Advertisement* of yours may be advanced to the same dignity of credit with the calumny of Valerius Antias? If it should, I would not undertake to dispute the fact itself, on which such an inference might be made; for I remember Tully, a great statesman himself,

\* Agellius.

† “ Now the reputation of the first Scipio was not so clear and  
“ uncontroverted in *private* as in public life; nor was he allowed  
“ by all to be a man of such severe virtue as he affected, and as  
“ that age required. Nævius was thought to mean him in some  
“ verses Gellius has preserved. And Valerius Antias made no  
“ scruple to assert, that far from restoring the fair Spaniard to her  
“ family, he debauched and kept her. Notwithstanding this,  
“ what authority did he not maintain? in what esteem and ve-  
“ neration did he not live and die?” p. 204. of *the idea of a pa-  
triot-king*.

The Words of Nævius are these,

*Etiam qui res magnas manu sæpe gessit gloriose,  
Cujus facta vi-va nunc vigent; qui apud gentes solus  
Præstat: eum suus pater cum pallio uno ab amica abduxit.*

These obscure verses were, in Gellius's opinion, the sole foundation of Antias's calumny, against the universal concurrence of historians. *His ego versibus credo adductum Valerium Antiatem adversum ceteros omnes scriptores de Scipionis moribus sensisse*, l. 6. c. 8. And what he thought of this historian's modesty and truth, we may collect from what he tells us of him in another place, where, having quoted two tribunitial decrees, which he says he transcribed from *Records*, [*ex annalium monumentis*] he adds, that Valerius Antias made no scruple to give the lye to them in public. *Valerius autem Antias, contra hanc decretorum memoriam contraque auctoritates veterum annalium—dixit*, &c. l. 7. c. 19. And Livy in his 36 B. quoting this Antias for the particulars of a victory, subjoins, concerning the number slain, *scriptori parum fidei sit, quia in eo augendo non alius intemperantior est*. And he that will amplify on one occasion, will diminish on another; for it is the same intemperate passion that carries him indifferently to either.

‡ See p. 201. of the *Idea of a Patriot-King*.



long ago observed, *Veræ amicitiae difficillime reperiuntur in iis qui in republica versantur.*

In conclusion, what we may learn from the moral of the tale is this, that excess, though in the social passions, lays us more open to *popular censure* than even the total want of them: because such excesses often produce effects that low minds cannot understand; or if they could, they would still want hearts warm enough to confess the value of them.

I am,

S I R,

&c.

F I N I S.

## E R R A T A:

P. 7. l. 16. for *lex*, read, *les*.

53. — in the note—for *two*, read *four*.

58. l. 8. for *comprehension*, read *comprehensive*.

60. l. 2. dele *perfect*.

67. l. 21. for *distinguishable*, read *distinguished*.

106. l. 9. dele *it*.

133. l. 6. for *essay*, read *elegy*.

135. l. 17. for, *he fancies to behold*, read *in fancy he beholds*.

139. penult—for *figure*, read *image*.

142. line the last of the note, for *faction*, read *party*.

212. l. 8. for *account*, read *accident*.

353. line the last—read *most of the first characters*.

356. l. 6. for *taking*, read *having*.

382. antepenult—for *of*, read *or*.

396. l. 15. after *obligation to*, add *thank*.















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